

Alleged Use of False Flag Attacks by Intelligence Agencies

[April 1950: Anti-Jewish Bombings in Iraq Are Attributed to Israelis](#)

A series of bombings targets Jews in Iraq. These attacks are later attributed to Israeli agents to allegedly panic Jews into emigrating to Israel, starting a long-standing controversy that continues unresolved. ([Segev 6/4/2006](#))



[1954-1970: CIA and the Muslim Brotherhood Ally to Oppose Egyptian President Nasser](#)

In 1954, Egyptian President Gamal Abdoul Nasser's nationalist policies in Egypt come to be viewed as completely unacceptable by Britain and the US. MI6 and the CIA jointly hatch plans for his assassination. According to Miles Copeland, a CIA operative based in Egypt, the opposition to Nasser is driven by the commercial community—the oil companies and the banks. At the same time, the Muslim Brotherhood's resentment of Nasser's secular government also comes to a head. In one incident, Islamist militants attack pro-Nasser students at Cairo University. Following an attempt on his own life by the Brotherhood, Nasser responds immediately by outlawing the group, which he denounces as a tool of Britain. The following years see a long and complex struggle pitting Nasser against the Muslim Brotherhood, the US, and Britain. The CIA funnels support to the Muslim Brotherhood because of "the Brotherhood's commendable capability to overthrow Nasser." ([Baer 2003, pp. 99](#); [Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 101-108](#)) The Islamist regime in Saudi Arabia becomes an ally of the United States in the conflict with Nasser. They offer financial backing and sanctuary to Muslim Brotherhood militants during Nasser's crackdown. Nasser dies of natural causes in 1970. ([Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 90-91, 126-131, 150](#))



[July 1954: Israel Commits Bombing Attacks in Egypt, Tries to Blame Muslim Brotherhood](#)

Bombs explode in British and American cultural centers and libraries, and in post offices in Alexandria and Cairo. The campaign ends when a bomb explodes prematurely in the pocket of an Israeli agent who is about to plant it in a British-owned cinema. The plan is to damage the relations between Egypt and the US and Britain by placing the blame for the bombings on the Muslim Brotherhood, an Egyptian Islamic militant group. An initial inquiry places blame on the Minister of Defense, Pinhas Lavon, but a subsequent inquiry

authorized by Sharett finds that Lavon was set up using forged documents, and that the true author of the false-flag attack was none other than David Ben Gurion, the “father of the Israeli State. (see [March 2005](#))” ([New York Times 12/11/1954](#); [Smith 3/30/1975](#); [Hirst 2003, pp. 290-296](#)) These events, which later become known as the Lavon Affair, will be documented in the diaries of Israeli Prime Minister Moshe Sharett, who did not learn of the plot until after it was completed. ([Rokach 1986](#))



[March 9, 1962: Proposed ‘Operation Northwoods’: US Military Would Conduct Terrorist Attacks, Then Blame Them on Cuba to Build Support for War Against Cuba](#)

In 2001, documents detailing a US military plan called Operation Northwoods will be declassified (see [April 24, 2001](#)). The plan suggests conducting terrorist attacks in the US and blame them on Castro’s government in order to create public support for a war against Cuba. The documents are dated March 9, 1962 and are written by the Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff Representative on the Caribbean Survey Group for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The papers suggest several possible events that the US could fabricate, including the sinking of boats of Cuban refugees, hijacking planes, blowing up a US ship, and even orchestrating violent terrorism in US cities. One of the document’s authors notes, “casualty lists in US newspapers would cause a helpful wave of national indignation.” ([US Department of Defense 3/13/1962](#); [Ruppe 5/1/2001](#); [Bamford 2002](#))



[1967-2001: Israel Provides Support to Militant Islamic Groups in the West Bank and Gaza](#)

Following the Six-Day War in 1967, Israel takes over the administration of the West Bank and Gaza. Whereas Egyptian President Gamal Abddul Nasser had been tough on Islamist militants (see [1954-1970](#)), Israel is much more permissive. One of their first actions is to release Sheikh Ahmed Yassin from prison. Yassin, a charismatic radical Islamist and the future founder of Hamas had been jailed in 1965 during one of Nasser’s crackdowns. ([Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 195](#)) David Shipler, a former New York Times reporter, later recounts that he was told by the military governor of the Gaza Strip, Brigadier General Yitzhak Segev, that the Israeli government had financed the Islamic movement to counteract the PLO and the communists. According to Martha Kessler, a senior analyst for the CIA, “we saw Israel cultivate Islam as a counterweight to Palestinian nationalism.” In the 1970s, Yassin is able to form some Islamic organizations (see [1973-1978](#)). In the 1980s, he forms Hamas as the military arm of his organizations (see [1987](#)). ([Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 195, 197, 198](#))



September 6-12, 1970 and After: 'Black September' Triggers Global Islamist Terrorism, Rise of PLO



Two of the airliners detonated by the hijackers at Dawson's Field on September 12, 1970. [Source: *Rolls Press / Popperfoto / Getty Images*] The first major act of Middle East terrorism on a global scale plays out in Jordan. Militant Palestinian nationalists hijack four Western commercial airliners and fly the planes and their passengers—now hostages—to a desert airfield near Amman. After negotiations, they release the hostages and blow up the empty airliners for the news cameras. Jordan's King Hussein responds by mobilizing his military for a showdown with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), a guerrilla organization based in his country. Hussein worries that Iraq or Syria might intervene on behalf of the PLO, and lets the US know that he would like US support in that event. Instead, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger makes the unlikely suggestion that Israel, not the US, step in to help Jordan if need be. President Nixon uses the incident to challenge the Soviet Union, warning the Soviets not to intervene if the US moves to prevent Syrian tanks from entering Jordan. Nixon often lets the Soviets and other adversaries think that he is capable of the most irrational acts—the “madman theory,” both Nixon and his critics call it—but Kissinger eventually convinces Nixon to support the idea of Israeli intervention. King Hussein secretly cables the British government to request an Israeli air strike, a cable routed to Washington via Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir. Nixon gives his approval and Israel moves in. 3,000 Palestinians and Jordanians die in the subsequent conflict, dubbed “Black September” in the Arab world. Hussein loses influence and prestige among his fellow Arab leaders, and the PLO, energized by the conflict, moves into Lebanon. PLO leader Yasser Arafat takes undisputed control of the organization. Oil-supplying nations rally behind the Palestinian cause, and international terrorist incidents begin to escalate. ([Werth 2006, pp. 90-91](#))



October 1970-1981: After Nasser's Death, Egyptian President Sadat Brings Back the Muslim Brotherhood and the CIA

After Egyptian President Gamal Abdoul Nasser dies in October 1970, he is succeeded as president of Egypt by his former Vice President, Anwar Sadat. Sadat is also a former member of the Muslim Brotherhood, and he promptly reinstates the group as a legal organization and welcomes them back into Egypt. Sadat also has a very close relationship with the head of Saudi intelligence, Kamal Adham. Through Adham, Sadat also develops close working relationships not only with the Saudis, but with the CIA and Henry Kissinger. Sadat uses the power of the religious right, and the Muslim Brothers in particular to contain the Nasserites and their resistance to the radical changes he

introduces. During Sadat's tenure in the 1970's Egypt becomes a hotbed of Islamic fundamentalism, and figures like Sheikh Omar Abdul-Rahman and Ayman al-Zawahiri gain great power in Egypt during this period. Ironically Sadat himself is assassinated in 1981 by Islamic Jihad, an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, in 1981, because of his accommodation with Israel. ([Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 147-162, 165](#))



1973-1978: With Israel's support, Ahmed Yassin Forms Islamist Organizations in the West Bank and Gaza

In 1973 Israeli military authorities in charge of the West Bank and Gaza allow Sheikh Ahmed Yassin to establish the Islamic Center, an Islamic fundamentalist organization. With Israel's support, Yassin's organization soon gains control of hundreds of mosques, charities, and schools which serve as recruiting centers for militant Islamic fundamentalism. In 1976 Yassin creates another organization called the Islamic Association that forms hundreds of branches in Gaza. In 1978 the Islamic Association is licensed by the government of Menachem Begin over the objections of moderate Palestinians including the Commissioner of the Muslim Waqf in the Gaza Strip, Rafat Abu Shaban. Yassin also receives funding from business leaders in Saudi Arabia who are also hostile to the secular PLO for religious reasons. The Saudi government, however, steps in and attempts to halt the private funds going to Yassin, because they view him as a tool of Israel. ([Sale 2/24/2001](#); [Hanania 1/18/2003](#); [Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 195 - 197](#)) Yassin will go on to form Hamas in the 1980s, which is created with the help of Israeli intelligence (see [1987](#)).



1973-1982: Israel and Jordan Support Muslim Brotherhood Terrorism Against Syria

In 1973 Hafez Assad approves a new, secular constitution for Syria, and declares that the country is a "democratic, popular, socialist state," creating a backlash of violent Islamist demonstrations. Beginning in 1976, the Muslim Brotherhood carries out hundreds of attacks in Syria in an attempt to bring down the secular government. Israel and Jordan provide generous support for these operations, for example establishing training camps for the Muslim Brotherhood in Lebanon and Jordan near the Syrian border. In one incident in 1979, a gang of Brotherhood militants murders 83 military cadets by locking them inside a building and attacking it with automatic weapons and firebombs. Newsweek reports in 1981 that "over the past five years the Brotherhood has assassinated hundreds of Alawite members of Assad's ruling Baath Party along with their relatives, Assad's personal doctor, and a number of Soviet advisers." In 1982, the Syrian army brutally suppresses the Muslim Brotherhood and their supporters, massacring thousands in the city of Hama, a strong center of support for the Brotherhood. This puts an end to the wave of violence. ([Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 199-205](#))



[September 1980: Pro-American Military Coup Takes Place in Turkey](#)

General Kenal Evren leads a military coup in Turkey. Richard Perle, in a 1999 article, will justify the pro-American coup as “a response by the Turkish armed forces to the breakdown of order and security and the rise of terrorism and widespread random violence in Turkey.” According to Perle, the wave of terrorism in Turkey “threatened to undermine American support, both popular and official, for Turkey and for close cooperation in security affairs between the United States and Turkey.” ([Perle 9/1999](#)) Perle says Turkey’s civilian government failed to maintain law and order. Conveniently, the clampdown that follows the coup enables the new government to begin implementing the pro-US strategic agenda that was laid out during the 1979 meeting arranged by Perle’s mentor, Albert Wohlstetter (see [1979](#)). It is now known that the terrorism that destabilized Turkey in the late 1970s was predominately the work of secret groups run by the Turkish military in conjunction with the CIA and NATO. ([Komisar 4/1997](#); [Kurkcu 6/1997](#); [Ganser 12/17/2004](#))



[Early 1981: Mossad Initiates Bombing Campaign in Europe against A. Q. Khan Network](#)

The Israeli intelligence service Mossad begins a bombing and intimidation campaign in Europe targeting people linked to A. Q. Khan’s nuclear proliferation network, which is helping Pakistan build a nuclear weapon. After Israel bombs an Iraqi nuclear reactor in Osirak in June 1981, the campaign intensifies. Attacks are carried out and warnings given in Europe against Khan’s suppliers and middlemen (see [Early 1981](#), [February 20, 1981](#), [Early 1981](#), [November 1981](#), and [1981](#)). The bombings are investigated by the police forces in the countries in which they occur and are traced to a group of apparent fronts for Mossad: the Group for Non-Proliferation in South Asia, the Committee to Safeguard the Islamic Revolution, and the League for Protecting the Sub-Continent. European police realize that a state-backed group is probably behind the bombings and suspect Mossad, due to the problematic relations between Israel and the Islamic world. Authors Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark will also say that Mossad was behind the bombings, partly based on interviews of “senior intelligence sources” in Israel in 2006. ([Levy and Scott-Clark 2007](#), pp. 87-8, 476)



February 1982: Article in Israeli Journal Says Israel Should Exploit Internal Tensions of Arab States

The winter issue of Kivunim, a “A Journal for Judaism and Zionism,” publishes “A Strategy for Israel in the Nineteen Eighties” by Oded Yinon. The paper, published in Hebrew, rejects the idea that Israel should carry through with the Camp David accords and seek peace. Instead, Yinon suggests that the Arab States should be destroyed from within by exploiting their internal religious and ethnic tensions: “Lebanon’s total dissolution into five provinces serves as a precedent for the entire Arab world including Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and the Arabian peninsula and is already following that track. The dissolution of Syria and Iraq later on into ethnically or religiously unique areas such as in Lebanon, is Israel’s primary target on the Eastern front in the long run, while the dissolution of the military power of those states serves as the primary short term target. Syria will fall apart, in accordance with its ethnic and religious structure, into several states such as in present day Lebanon.” ([Shahak 2/1982](#))



1984-1989: Israeli Intelligence Officer Supplies Arms to Iran; Some Profits Allegedly Used to Fund False Flag Attacks

By his own account, Israeli intelligence officer Ari Ben Menashe runs a covert Israeli arms network, primarily supplying weapons to the Islamic fundamentalist regime in Iran for use in the Iran-Iraq War. Huge profits are made. “At various times the fund reached peaks of more than \$1 billion,” he later explains in his book, Profits of War. “At its height it stood at \$1.8 billion... Between 1984 and 1989 no less than \$160 million was funneled to [Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak] Shamir’s [Likud] faction.” He also says that the money helped finance the intelligence community’s “black” operations including “Israeli-controlled ‘Palestinian terrorists’ who would commit crimes in the name of the Palestinian revolution but were actually pulling them off, usually unwittingly, as part of the Israeli propaganda machine.” The Israeli government will later deny that Menashe had any association with their intelligence services. But faced with evidence, the government will change its story, alleging that he was only a low-level translator who had taken to freelancing arms deals. However, ben Menashe is able to produce strong evidence to support his version of events and his 1991 trial in New York will culminate in his acquittal on the grounds that the jury disbelieves the Israeli government’s denials. ([Ben-Menashe 1992, pp. 120](#); [Parry 1997](#); [Coll 2004, pp. 120](#))



April 17, 1984: Libyan Diplomats Allegedly Shoot and Kill British Policewoman; Case Remains Unsolved and Controversial



Yvonne Fletcher. [Source: Public domain] Woman Police Constable Yvonne Fletcher is shot and killed in London's St James's Square during a protest outside the Libyan embassy. Eleven demonstrators protesting against Libyan ruler Mu'ammr al-Qadhafi are also injured in the volley of gun fire. The shooting is followed by a siege of the embassy, as well as the breakdown of diplomatic relations between Britain and Libya. After ten days, thirty Libyan diplomats are allowed to leave Britain. Because they are granted diplomatic immunity, there is effectively no police investigation in Fletcher's murder. ([BBC 3/25/2004](#)) Not everyone, however, is convinced that Libyans are to blame. In 1996, Channel Four shows a documentary entitled *Dispatches: Murder at St James's*, in which several respected criminal and ballistic experts express doubts that the fatal shot could have come from the embassy. The program is praised by Tam Dalyell, a veteran Labour MP, who is also a critic of the governmental investigation of the Lockerbie crash. These arguments are dismissed by British authorities. ([Guardian 7/23/1997](#)) Later, the Libyan government, eager to ease crippling diplomatic and economic sanctions, accepts "general responsibility" for the death and allows British investigators to come to Libya in search of the shooter, but Scotland Yard fails to find him. The case remains unsolved. ([Townsend 6/24/2007](#))



(1985): CIA Agent Proposes False Flag Attacks in Europe in Name of Hezbollah; Modified Proposal Is Implemented

CIA agent Robert Baer proposes a series of false flag attacks in Europe to drive a wedge between Syria and Iran, which he hopes will lead to the freeing of Western hostages held in Lebanon. Although his superiors ban the use of real explosives, the proposal is implemented in altered form. Baer is aware that the current secular Syrian government is nervous about the tendency of Iran, one of its allies, to support numerous Islamic movements, including ones generally opposed to Syria. He plans to make the Syrians think that Iran has turned against it by carrying out a series of car bombings against Syrian diplomats in Europe and then claiming them in a statement issued by the CIA

pretending to be the Lebanon-based and Iran-backed terror group Hezbollah. Baer thinks that Syria would then break with Hezbollah and the hostages would be freed. Although the plan is for the bombs to misfire and the diplomats not to be killed, his superior says that the use of any bombs in Europe is beyond the pale for the CIA. Baer will later comment: “Eventually we did get an operation through the bureaucracy. The CIA has asked me not to describe it. I can say, though, that while it managed to irritate [Syrian president] Hafiz al-Asad—sort of like a twenty-four hour diaper rash—it wasn’t enough for him to shut down Hezbollah.” ([Baer 2002, pp. 140-2](#))



1987: Hamas Forms with the Support of Israeli Intelligence

Sheikh Ahmed Yassin forms Hamas as the military arm of his Islamic Association, which had been licensed by Israel ten years earlier (see [1973-1978](#)). According to Charles Freeman, a former US ambassador to Saudi Arabia, “Israel started Hamas. It was a project of Shin Bet, which had a feeling that they could use it to hem in the PLO.” ([Hanania 1/18/2003](#); [Dreyfuss 2005, pp. 191, 208](#)) Anthony Cordesman, a Middle East analyst for the Center for Strategic Studies, states that Israel “aided Hamas directly—the Israelis wanted to use it as a counterbalance to the PLO.” A former senior CIA official speaking to UPI describes Israel’s support for Hamas as “a direct attempt to divide and dilute support for a strong, secular PLO by using a competing religious alternative.” Further, according to an unnamed US government official, “the thinking on the part of some of the right-wing Israeli establishment was that Hamas and the other groups, if they gained control, would refuse to have anything to do with the peace process and would torpedo any agreements put in place.” Larry Johnson, a counterterrorism official at the State Department, states: “The Israelis are their own worst enemies when it comes to fighting terrorism. They are like a guy who sets fire to his hair and then tries to put it out by hitting it with a hammer. They do more to incite and sustain terrorism than curb it.” ([Sale 2/24/2001](#) Sources: [Larry C. Johnson](#), Unnamed former CIA official)



September 14, 1987-March 2005: Arrested Militant Not Asked by US about Various Crimes

Fawaz Younis, a Lebanese militant associated with the Amal militia, a Shiite organization that is influential in Lebanon at this time, is arrested in international waters near Cyprus on September 14, 1987 during a joint FBI-CIA operation. However, US authorities fail to ask him about activities in Lebanon, such as the murders of CIA officers, kidnappings of US citizens who will later be part of an arms-for-hostages deal with Iran (see [May 29, 1986](#)), and an attack on the US marine barracks in Beirut, where over 200 people were killed (see [April 18-October 23, 1983](#)). Authors Joe and Susan Trento will say, “The key to all these unasked questions may be that those in charge did not want to know the answers.” For example, he is not asked about cooperation between the Amal group, which had a covert relationship with the CIA, and Hezbollah in the

bombings. One possible reason for this is that Amal head Nabih Berri has “full knowledge of the arms-for-hostages deal,” an aspect of the Iran-Contra scandal. After Younis is released in 2005, the Trentos will interview him and he will say that Amal was co-responsible for the attacks: “Nothing happened in areas we controlled without Amal’s cooperation.” He will also say that Berri ordered some of the hijackings and that he cannot understand “why the United States allowed him to get away with it.” In addition, he will comment, “Privately, people in our government will say we cannot act [against Islamic militancy] in Lebanon because Nabih Berri is a valuable US intelligence asset,” and, “That lack of action is seen by the Hezbollah as evidence of America’s lack of seriousness and resolve in the War on Terror.” Regarding 9/11, he will say, “I have no doubt that our experience in breaking through airport security, developing sources and help among airport staff, was information that Hezbollah passed on to al-Qaeda.” ([Trento and Trento 2006, pp. 213, 215-7](#))



[Early 1990s and After: Mysterious Links Seen between Right Wing Westerners and Philippine Muslim Militants](#)

In 2002, a Philippine newspaper article will claim that “Philippine police have long been aware of operational ties between local Islamic radicals and right-wing foreigners.” Apparently these ties become first noticeable in the early 1990s. The article is mainly about a 1996 recorded testimonial by Edwin Angeles, a Philippine undercover agent who had posed as a leader of the Philippine militant group Abu Sayyaf until 1995 (see [1991-Early February 1995](#)). In his testimony, he claimed to have attended meetings between Muslim militants and Oklahoma City bomber Terry Nichols, plus another right-wing American named John Lepney (see [Late 1992-Early 1993 and Late 1994](#)). The article notes that Philippine officials believe such ties were not limited to these cases. “Why the strange alliance exists remains a puzzle to police and military intelligence agents. A senior counterterrorism expert says commerce and short-term goals could account for the unusual ties. ‘Eventually, they’ll be killing each other. But for now, they seem to be working together.’” Lepney had been seen in the rebellious areas of the southern Philippines since 1990 and occasionally boasted of his rebel ties. ([Zumel-Sicat 4/26/2002](#)) Additionally, Michael Meiring, a US citizen who may have been a CIA operative with ties to Muslim militant leaders (see [May 16, 2002](#)) and [December 2, 2004](#)), periodically appeared in the same region beginning in 1992 (see [1992-1993](#)). He sometimes stayed in Davao City, the same city where Lepney was based. Meiring claims to be a treasure hunter, but military officials note that there are “terrorists and intelligence operatives of all stripes about among treasure hunters’ circles.” Meiring also had ties to at least one neo-Nazi figure in the US. ([Zumel-Sicat and Andrade 5/30/2002](#); [Zumel-Sicat 5/31/2002](#)) Philippine officials will later identify a number of other suspicious right-wing Westerners living in the rebellious southern region of the country in the early 1990s. For instance, there is US citizen Nina North, whom acquaintances claim has CIA connections. From 1990 to 1992, she was reportedly working on business deals with bin Laden and other Middle East figures involving the transfer of gold bullion. In 2002, Philippine officials will claim that ties between right-wing Westerners and Muslim

militants continue to the present day but they do not provide new information because of ongoing investigations. ([Zumel-Sicat 5/31/2002](#))



1991-Early February 1995: Al-Qaeda Linked Philippine Militant Group Deeply Penetrated by Government Operative



Edwin Angeles. [Source: Robin Moyer] Edwin Angeles helps found the new Muslim militant group Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines and becomes the group's second in command and operations officer. But Angeles is actually a deep cover operative for the Philippine government and has already penetrated the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), a much larger rebel group that Abu Sayyaf splintered from. Angeles is the first to suggest that Abu Sayyaf take part in kidnappings, and plans the group's first kidnapping for ransom in 1992. He will be directly involved in numerous violent acts committed by Abu Sayyaf until his cover is blown in early 1995 (see [Late 1994-January 1995](#) and [Early February 1995](#)). ([Philippine Daily Inquirer 7/10/2001](#)) Colonel Rodolfo Mendoza, who will later lead the Philippine investigation in the Bojinka plot, is his main handler. Mendoza will later recall, "I received orders to handle him... I had the impression he was also being handled by somebody higher." ([Vitug and Gloria 2000](#)) In 2002, one of Angeles' wives will claim in a deathbed confession that Angeles told her he was a "deep-penetration agent" working for "some very powerful men in the DND (Department of National Defense)," the Philippine national defense-intelligence agency. ([Timmerman 6/22/2002](#)) During this time, Abu Sayyaf is very active. Philippine intelligence will later estimate that from 1991 to 1995 the group launches 67 kidnappings and violent attacks, killing around 136 people and injuring hundreds more. ([Abuza 9/1/2005](#).)



December 1991-October 27, 1994: Islamist Militants Stage Numerous Attacks in Algeria



GIA logo. [Source: Public domain] The Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA), established in 1991, allegedly is an Islamist militant group linked to al-Qaeda, but there are allegations it was manipulated by the Algerian government from its inception (see [1991](#)). Militants launch their first attack in December 1991, shortly before an Algerian army coup (see [January 11, 1992](#)), striking a military base, killing conscripts there and seizing weapons. The GIA competes with an existing militant group, the Armed Islamic Movement (MIA), which changes its name to the Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) in 1993 and becomes the armed wing of the banned FIS party. After the army coup, the GIA and AIS stage many attacks in Algeria. The GIA is more active, targeting many government employees, intellectuals, and foreigners for assassination, and attacking factories, railroads, bridges, banks, military garrisons, and much more. They generally try to minimize civilian casualties, but hope to create a state of fear that will lead to paralysis and the collapse of the government. The group goes through four leaders during this time. But in October 1994 a new leader will take over, dramatically changing the direction of the group (see [October 27, 1994-July 16, 1996](#)). (Crotty 2005, pp. 291)



1992: Al-Qaeda Southeast Asian Affiliate Is Founded; Founding Member Is Indonesian Government Mole



Fauzi Hasbi. [Source: SBS Dateline] In 1992, the Southeast Asian Islamist militant group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is founded. It will eventually become known as al-Qaeda's main affiliate in the region. Actually, many of its alleged founders, such as Abu Bakar Bashir, have been pressing Islamist militant causes for several decades, but with the creation of JI their efforts become more violent. Also in contrast to

previous Islamist groups in the region, JI is deliberately set up as a military organization. One of the founding members of JI is Fauzi Hasbi, who has been an Indonesian government mole posing as a militant leader since the late 1970s (see [1979-February 22, 2003](#)). Hasbi actually facilitates JI's first major meeting, held in Bogor, Indonesia. For many years, he also lives in the same small Malaysian village as the top JI leaders, such as Bashir and Hambali (see [April 1991-Late 2000](#)). The Australian television program *SBS Dateline* will later comment: "The extraordinary story of Fauzi Hasbi raises many important questions about JI and the Indonesian authorities. Why didn't they smash the terror group in its infancy?" Umar Abduh, an Indonesian Islamist convicted of terrorism and jailed for ten years, works with Hasbi. In 2005, he will claim that in retrospect he realizes that he and other militants were completely manipulated by the government. "[T]here is not a single Islamic group, either in the movement or the political groups that is not controlled by [Indonesian intelligence]. Everyone does what they say." ([Bonner 8/27/2003](#); [SBS Dateline 10/12/2005](#))



1992-1993: Suspected CIA Operative Has Ties to Philippine Militant Leaders

Michael Meiring, a suspected CIA operative connected to Philippine militant groups (see [May 16, 2002](#)), first comes to the Philippines and lives there for a year. According to a later report by the Manila Times, Meiring lives in the capital of Manila and is frequently seen with two agents of the Philippine National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). Yet at the same time he is believed to have ties with the top leaders of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which, together with the Abu Sayyaf, are the main Muslim militant groups in the southern Philippines. "Meiring's connections with rebel leaders made the military wary about him. He was under surveillance by more than one intelligence unit on more than one occasion." One close US friend later claims that in 1992 Meiring said he had found and sold a box full of US Federal Reserve notes worth more than \$500 million. It is believed that he spends millions of dollars while in the Philippines. ([Zumel-Sicat 5/29/2002](#)) (There appear to have been frequent scams in the Philippines involving millions and even billions of dollars of fraudulent US Federal Reserve notes.) ([McGirk 2/26/2001](#)) Meiring, a former citizen of South Africa, fled to the US when he became the subject of an investigation toward the end of South Africa's apartheid regime. He then became a US citizen. Meiring is connected to a group of treasure hunters led by James Rowe, an American. Rowe connects with a group of right-wing white supremacists linked to the US neo-Nazi party. In 1993, Meiring and Rowe travel to the Philippines together. ([Zumel-Sicat and Andrade 5/30/2002](#)) Meiring will come and go between the US and the Philippines for the next ten years, claiming to be a treasure hunter. In 2002 he will be severely injured by a bomb he is trying to make and will be whisked out of the Philippines by US officials (see [May 16, 2002](#)) and [December 2, 2004](#)). Philippine officials have observed other right-wing Americans with ties to Muslim militants starting in the early 1990s (see [Early 1990s and After](#)). ([Zumel-Sicat 5/29/2002](#))



March 17, 1992: Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires Is Bombed, Hezbollah and Iran Accused Despite Lack of Evidence



Rescue workers in the wreckage of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires. [Source: Reuters / Corbis] Twenty-nine people are killed in the bombing of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The bombing levels the three-story building. Argentina, the US, and Israel will later accuse Hezbollah and its backer Iran, but provide little evidence. According to most media accounts and the US State Department's annual report on terrorism, the bombing was the work of a Hezbollah suicide bomber who drove a truck into the building. ([Los Angeles Times 5/8/1992](#); [State 4/30/1993](#); [Fox News 10/5/2007](#)) However, a technical report ordered by Argentina's Supreme Court will find that the bomb was placed inside the building: "Court official Guillermo Lopez said that the investigation had ascertained that the explosives had been located on the first floor of the diplomatic headquarters. 'The engineers established, with 99 percent certainty, the exact location where the explosives were and the quantity that was used.'" That conclusion is angrily rejected by Israel. ([NotiSur 8/16/1996](#)) The case remains unsolved. ([Ha'aretz 3/17/2008](#))



Mid-September 1992: Bosnia Muslims Stage Attack from Sarajevo Hospital to Discredit Serbians

Lord David Owen arrives in Sarajevo as the new European Union peace negotiator. Owen is initially seen as anti-Serb and had recently advocated Western air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs. He is outraged that his arrival coincides with a Serb bombardment of the Kosevo Hospital in Sarajevo, Bosnia. But within hours, he learns that the incident was actually provoked by the Bosnian Muslims. He will later say, "The UN monitors actually saw the Muslim troops enter the hospital and, from the hospital grounds, firing at Serb positions. Then the mortar was packed up and removed as the television crew showed up. A few minutes later a retaliatory fire of course landed in or near the hospital and all was filmed for television." UN Gen. Philippe Morillon immediately writes a letter to Bosnian President Izetbegovic: "I now have concrete evidence from witnesses of this

cowardly and disreputable act and I must point out the harm such blatant disregard for the Geneva Convention does to your cause.” But the letter and information about the incident is not made public and the Serbs are the only ones blamed for the incident. Owen will later say, “I asked Morillon why didn’t he make this public, and he shrugged his shoulders [and said], ‘We have to live here.’” ([Rothstein 1999, pp. 176, 188](#))



December 8, 1992: UN and Senior Western Military Officials Claim Bosnian Muslims Are Attacking Their Own People to Gain International Sympathy

The Independent reports, “United Nations officials and senior Western military officers believe some of the worst recent killings in Sarajevo, including the massacre of at least 16 people in a bread queue, were carried out by the city’s mainly Muslim defenders - not Serb besiegers - as a propaganda ploy to win world sympathy and military intervention. The view has been expressed in confidential reports circulating at UN headquarters in New York, and in classified briefings to US policymakers in Washington. All suggest that Sarajevo’s defenders, mainly Muslims but including Croats and a number of Serb residents, staged several attacks on their own people in the hope of dramatizing the city’s plight in the face of insuperable Serbian odds. They emphasize, however, that these attacks, though bloody, were a tiny minority among regular city bombardments by Serbian forces.” The reports claim the following events were likely committed by the Bosnian Muslims:

- The bombing of a bread line in Sarajevo on May 27, 1992.
- A mortar attack on July 17, 1992, hitting a bunker where British minister Douglas Hurd was meeting with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic. Ten bystanders were killed or wounded.
- An August 4, 1992, explosion at a cemetery while two orphans were being buried.
- The August 13, 1992, death of ABC News producer David Kaplan near Sarajevo. One UN military officer says it would have been impossible the bullet that killed him was fired by a sniper from distant Serbian positions. “That shot came in horizontal to the ground. Somebody was down at ground level.”
- A Ukrainian soldier killed in Sarajevo on December 3, 1992, was similarly shot by small arms fire which would imply the Bosnian Muslims.

The UN officials behind these reports claim that are not trying to exonerate the Serbs, who also have been killing many in sniper attacks, mortar rounds, and so forth. “But they expressed fears that the ‘self-inflicted’ attacks may not augur well for existing UN forces or for additional Western troops, including Britons, who have to serve there.” ([Doyle 8/22/1992](#))



July 18, 1994: Anti-Jewish Bombing in Buenos Aires Is Blamed on Hezbollah and Iran Despite Lack of Proof



Wreckage of the AMIA

Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Argentina, [Source: Reuters / Corbis] A Jewish community center called AMIA in Buenos Aires, Argentina, is destroyed in a blast. The seven-story building is reduced to rubble and eighty-five people are killed. ([BBC 8/25/2003](#)) Argentinean authorities, as well as the United States and Israel, are quick to blame Hezbollah and its backer, Iran. They accuse an Iranian diplomat of having provided a van packed with explosives to a Hezbollah suicide bomber.

Problems with Investigation - But the investigation becomes the subject of intense controversy. Argentine President Nestor Kirchner will later call it “a national disgrace.” In 2003, it will be revealed that the investigative judge offered an apparent bribe to the man accused of selling the van used in the attack in exchange for his testimony against local police officers charged with complicity in the bombing. That judge will later be impeached and removed from office and the case will collapse. ([Gotkine 12/3/2003](#); [BBC 8/3/2005](#))

Forensic Evidence - Critics will also argue that the forensic evidence suggests that the bomb exploded inside the building, rather than in the street. This will be the conclusion reached by Charles Hunter, an explosives expert with the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) who was part of the investigation. Hunter will quickly identify “major discrepancies” between the car-bomb thesis and the blast pattern recorded in photos. A report drafted two weeks later will note that, in the wake of the bombing, merchandise in a store immediately to the right of AMIA was tightly packed against its front windows and merchandise in another shop had been blown out onto the street—suggesting that the blast came from inside rather than outside. Hunter will also say he does not understand how the building across the street could still be standing if the bomb had exploded in front of AMIA. Investigators will find no conclusive evidence against any Iranian diplomat. The US ambassador to Argentina at the time, James Cheek, will comment in a 2008 article: “To my knowledge, there was never any real evidence of [Iranian responsibility]. They never came up with anything.” ([Porter 1/18/2008](#))

Nevertheless, in November 2007, Argentina, with strong support from the US and Israel,

will successfully persuade Interpol to issue arrest warrants against several Iranian officials and one Lebanese Hezbollah militant. ([Solomon and Perez 1/15/2008](#))



October 27, 1994-July 16, 1996: Government Mole Takes Over Algerian GIA, Causes Group to Splinter and Lose Popularity



Djamel Zitouni. [*Source: Fides Journal*]/Djamel Zitouni takes over the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA). There are allegations that the Algerian government manipulated the GIA from its creation in 1991 (see [1991](#)). After going through several leaders, it appears that the GIA's new leader Zitouni is in fact an agent of the Algerian intelligence agency. For instance, in 2005 the Guardian will report that Algerian intelligence "managed to place Djamel Zitouni, one of the Islamists it controlled, at the head of the GIA." ([Bouteldja 9/8/2005](#)) And journalist Jonathan Randal will write in a 2005 book that according to Abdelkhader Tighe, a former Algerian security officer, "army intelligence controlled overall GIA leader Djamel Zitouni and used his men to massacre civilians to turn Algerian and French public opinion against the jihadis." ([Randal 2005, pp. 170-171](#)) Indeed, prior to Zitouni taking over, the GIA tried to limit civilian casualties in their many attacks (see [December 1991-October 27, 1994](#)). But Zitouni launches many attacks on civilian targets. He also attacks other Islamist militant groups, such as the rival Islamic Salvation Army (AIS). He also launches a series of attacks inside France. ([Crotty 2005, pp. 291-292](#)) Zitouni also kills many of the genuine Islamists within the GIA. ([Campbell 2/14/2004](#)) These controversial tactics cause the GIA to slowly lose popular support and the group also splits into many dissident factions. Some international militant leaders such as Ayman al-Zawahiri and Abu Qatada continue to support the GIA. He will finally be killed by a rival faction on July 16, 1996. ([Crotty 2005, pp. 291-292](#))



[January 13, 1995: Algerian Government Responds to Peace Overtures by Plotting False Flag Attacks in France](#)



The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) logo. [Source:

*Public domain]*The Italian government hosts a meeting in Rome of Algerian political parties, including the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), whose probable election win was halted by an army coup in 1992 (see [January 11, 1992](#)). Eight political parties representing 80 percent of the vote in the last multi-party election agree on a common platform brokered by the Catholic community of Sant'Egidio, Italy, known as the Sant'Egidio Platform. The militant Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA) is the only significant opposition force not to participate in the agreement. The parties agree to a national conference that would precede new multi-party elections. They call for an inquiry into the violence in Algeria, a return to constitutional rule, and the end of the army's involvement in politics. The Independent notes the agreement "[does] much to bridge the enmity between religious and lay parties and, most significantly, pushe[s] the FIS for the first time into an unequivocal declaration of democratic values." French President Francois Mitterrand soon proposes a European Union peace initiative to end the fighting in Algeria, but the Algerian government responds by recalling its ambassador to France. ([Gumbel 2/5/1995](#)) The Washington Post notes that the agreement "demonstrate[s] a growing alliance between the Islamic militants [such as the GIA], waging a deadly underground war with government security forces, and the National Liberation Front," Algeria's ruling party, as both are opposed to peace with the FIS and other opposition parties. ([Drozdiak 1/14/1995](#)) The Guardian will later report that these peace overtures "left [Algeria's] generals in an untenable position. In their desperation, and with the help of the DRS [Algeria's intelligence agency], they hatched a plot to prevent French politicians from ever again withdrawing support for the military junta." The GIA is heavily infiltrated by Algerian government moles at this time and even the GIA's top leader, Djamel Zitouni, is apparently working for Algerian intelligence (see [October 27, 1994-July 16, 1996](#)). Some GIA moles are turned into agent provocateurs. GIA leader Ali Touchent, who the Guardian will say is one of the Algerian moles, begins planning attacks in France in order to turn French public opinion against the Algerian opposition and in favor of the ruling Algerian government (see [July-October 1995](#)). The GIA also plots against some of the FIS's leaders living in Europe. ([Bouteldja 9/8/2005](#))



[Early February 1995: Philippine Undercover Operative Exposed Shortly after Bojinka Plot Was Foiled](#)

Edwin Angeles, a Philippine government operative so deeply embedded in the Muslim militant group Abu Sayyaf that he is actually the group's second in command (see [1991-Early February 1995](#)), surrenders to Philippine authorities. Angeles will later tell a reporter that he was not supposed to surrender yet and was surprised that his military handlers unmasked his cover. ([Philippine Daily Inquirer 7/10/2001](#)) One report suggests a slightly different account: "In early February, rumors began to circulate that Angeles... was, in fact, a deep-penetration agent planted by the Philippine military; Angeles heard the rumors and knew he would be killed," so he turned himself in. In any case, the timing may have something to do with the Bojinka plot, which he was involved in and was foiled just the month before (see [January 6, 1995](#) and [Late 1994-January 1995](#)). Angeles is debriefed for weeks and reveals many details about the Bojinka plot and Abu Sayyaf generally. It is not known what he may have told Philippine intelligence about the Bojinka plot while the plot was still in motion, if anything. ([Murdoch 6/3/1995](#)) Angeles leads the military in a number of operations against Abu Sayyaf and helps capture several top leaders, removing any doubt for the group that he was an undercover agent. Angeles then becomes a Philippine intelligence agent but, soon he has a falling out over what he believes are unethical methods and goes public with his complaints later in the year. He is then charged with multiple counts of kidnapping and murder for his actions when he was an Abu Sayyaf leader. However, he will be acquitted after the judge announces Angeles proved the crimes were all done as part of his job as an undercover operative. Hated by both the Philippine government and Abu Sayyaf, Angeles will disappear into the jungle and try to start his own rebel group. However, he will be shot and killed in early 1999. ([Philippine Daily Inquirer 7/10/2001](#))



[April 4, 1995: Philippine Militant Group Attacks Town: Government Alleged to Support the Attack](#)



Devastation after the raid on Ipil. [Source: Romeo Gacad / Agence France-Presse / Getty Images] The Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim

militant group, attacks the Christian town of Ipil in the Southern Philippines. About 200 militants burn, loot, and shoot inside the town for hours, killing 53 and withdrawing with 30 hostages. In 2001, the Independent calls this the group's "bloodiest and most shocking attack." ([Richburg 5/25/1995](#); [Parry 3/4/2001](#)) Edwin Angeles is an undercover operative for the Philippine government while also serving as Abu Sayyaf's second in command (see [1991-Early February 1995](#)). Although Angeles' undercover status was exposed in February 1995 (see [Early February 1995](#)), he claims to still have been in the group when the raid was planned. He says the raid was to test a new group of recruits recently returned from training in Pakistan, and to rob several banks. ([Richburg 5/25/1995](#)) Aquilino Pimentel, president of the Philippines Senate, will later allege that Angeles told him later in 1995 that the Philippine government provided the Abu Sayyaf with military vehicles, mortars, and assorted firearms to assist them with the raid. ([Pimentel 7/31/2000](#)) At this time, the Philippine government is unpopular due to a recent scandal and is attempting to pass an anti-terrorism bill. The government has sometimes been accused of manipulating the Abu Sayyaf for Machiavellian purposes (see [1994](#), [July 31, 2000](#), and [July 27-28, 2003](#)).



[July-October 1995: Wave of Attacks in France Blamed on Algerian Islamist Militants Were Likely Masterminded by Algerian Government](#)



A Paris subway car bombed in 1995. [Source: *Associated Press*] Ten French citizens die and more than two hundred are injured in a series of attacks in France from July to October 1995. Most of the attacks are caused by the explosion of rudimentary bombs in the Paris subway. The deaths are blamed on the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA) Algerian militant group. Some members of the banned Algerian opposition Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) living in exile in France are killed as well. For instance, high-level FIS leader Abdelbaki Sahraoui is assassinated on July 11, 1995. The GIA takes credit for these acts. The attacks mobilize French public opinion against the Islamic opposition in Algerian and causes the French government to abandon

its support for recent Algerian peace plans put forth by a united opposition front (see [January 13, 1995](#)). ([BBC 10/30/2002](#); [Randal 2005, pp. 171, 316-317](#); [Bouteldja 9/8/2005](#)) However, in September 1995, French Interior Minister Jean-Louis Debré says, “It cannot be excluded that Algerian intelligence may have been implicated” in the first bombing, which hit the Saint-Michel subway stop in Paris on July 25 and killed eight. ([BBC 10/31/2002](#); [Randal 2005, pp. 316-317](#)) And as time goes on, Algerian officials defect and blame Algerian intelligence for sponsoring all the attacks. Ali Touchent is said to be the GIA leader organizing the attacks (see [January 13, 1995](#)). But Mohammed Samraoui, former deputy chief of the Algerian army’s counterintelligence unit, will later claim that Touchent was an Algerian intelligence “agent tasked with infiltrating Islamist ranks abroad and the French knew it.” But he adds the French “probably did not suspect their Algerian counterparts were prepared to go so far.” ([Randal 2005, pp. 316-317](#)) A long-time Algerian secret agent known only by the codename Yussuf-Joseph who defected to Britain will later claim that the bombings in France were supported by Algerian intelligence in order to turn French public opinion against the Islamic opposition in Algeria. He says that intelligence agents went sent to France by General Smain Lamari, head of the Algerian counterintelligence department, to directly organize at least two of the French bombings. The operational leader was actually Colonel Souames Mahmoud, head of the intelligence at the Algerian Embassy in Paris. ([Sweeney and Doyle 11/9/1997](#)) In 2002, a French television station will air a 90-minute documentary tying the bombings to Algerian intelligence. In the wake of the broadcast, Alain Marsaud, French counterintelligence coordinator in the 1980s, will say, “State terrorism uses screen organizations. In this case, [the GIA was] a screen organization in the hands of the Algerian security services... it was a screen to hold France hostage.” ([Campbell 2/14/2004](#))



[March 26-May 21, 1996: French Monks in Algeria Kidnapped and Killed by Algerian Intelligence Working with Compromised Islamic Militants](#)



A photo montage of the seven murdered monks from Tibhirine. [*Source: Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance*] (click image to enlarge) On March 26, 1996, a group of armed men break into a Trappist monastery in the remote mountain region of Tibhirine, Algeria, and kidnap seven of the nine monks living there. They are held hostage for two months and then Djamel Zitouni, head of the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA), announces that they were all killed on May 21, 1996. The French government and the Roman Catholic church state the GIA is to blame. But years later, Abdelkader Tigha, former head of Algeria’s military security, will claim the kidnapping was planned by Algerian officials to get the monks out of a

highly contested area. He says government agents kidnapped the monks and then handed them to a double agent in the GIA. But the plan went awry and the militants assigned to carry it out killed the monks. Furthermore, it will later be alleged that Zitouni was a mole for Algerian intelligence (see [October 27, 1994-July 16, 1996](#)). ([Lichfield 12/24/2002](#); [United Press International 8/20/2004](#)) In 2004, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika will reopen the controversy when he says of the monks' deaths, "Not all truth is good to say when [the issue is still] hot." ([United Press International 8/20/2004](#)) He will also say, "Don't forget that the army saved Algeria. Whatever the deviations there may have been, and there were some, just because you have some rotten tomatoes you do not throw all of them away." ([Wilkinson 4/7/2004](#))



[January 16, 1999: US Diplomat Claims Massacre of Albanians; Foreign Press Disputes Allegation](#)

The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) invites foreign journalists to the scene of an alleged Serb massacre of some 45 Albanians in Raqak, Kosovo. Later, at 12 noon, the Kosovo Verification Mission leader, US diplomat William Walker, leads another group of news reporters to the scene. The story makes international headlines and is later used to justify NATO bombings. The New York Times will call this the "turning point" in NATO's decision to wage war on Yugoslavia. But the claim that a massacre occurred is quickly called into question. It turns out that an Associated Press television crew—at the invitation of Yugoslav authorities—had filmed a shootout the day before between the Yugoslav police and fighters with the KLA at the location where the alleged massacre took place. They say that upon arriving in Raqak most of the villagers had already fled the expected gun battle between the KLA and the police. They also report that they did not witness any executions or massacres of civilians. Furthermore, after the firefight, at about 3:30 p.m., the Yugoslav police announced in a press conference that they had killed 15 KLA "terrorists" in Raqak. And then about an hour later, at 4:40 p.m., and then again at 6 p.m., a Le Monde reporter visited the scene and reported that he saw no indications that a massacre of civilians had occurred. Finally, the foreign journalists escorted to Raqak by the KLA found no shell casings lying around the scene. "What is disturbing," correspondent Renaud Girard remarks, "is that the pictures filmed by the Associated Press journalists radically contradict Walker's accusations." Belarussian and Finnish forensic experts later investigate the claims but are unable to verify that a massacre actually took place. ([Chatelot 1/21/1999](#); [Chatelot 1/21/1999](#); [Covert Action Quarterly 6/1999](#))



August 9, 1999: Russian President Yeltsin Sacks Government, Nominates Vladimir Putin Acting Prime Minister



Yeltsin and Putin [Source: BBC] Russian President Boris Yeltsin dismisses his prime minister, Sergei Stepashin, and the entire Russian government, naming Vladimir Putin as acting prime minister. Putin is the head of the Federal Security Service (FSB), which is the new name of the KGB. ([BBC 8/9/1999](#)) For many observers, Stepashin was dismissed because he had been unable to become a politically viable heir to Yeltsin, who must step down in 2001. Putin, who is unknown to the public, seems to have been hand-picked mainly for his loyalty. ([Bohlen 8/10/1999](#)) The Russian news service Park.ru offers this fairly representative analysis: “Only a trusted person from one of the ‘power ministries’ can ensure the safety of Yeltsin’s entourage after his term in office, and the former FSB boss can prove indispensable.” ([BBC 8/9/1999](#))



August 18, 1999: Yeltsin Opponents Join Forces



Yevgeny Primakov [Source: BBC (2000)] Yevgeny Primakov, who was Russian prime minister until he was summarily dismissed by President Boris Yeltsin in May 1999, announces that he will lead Yuri Luzhkov’s Fatherland-All Russia party for the upcoming Duma elections in December. Polls indicate Primakov is the country’s most trusted politician. He has demonstrated his willingness to investigate corruption. The Primakov-Luzhkov alliance threatens the Kremlin’s plans for a political succession that would protect Yeltsin’s entourage after the next presidential elections, scheduled for June 2006. But in an attempt to re-assure the Kremlin, Primakov proposes a new law guaranteeing “full security and a worthy life” to presidents after they leave office. Reports the New York Times: “That last proposal was

an obvious olive branch to Mr. Yeltsin and his presidential administration, whose increasingly desperate battle to influence the choice of a presidential successor is widely thought to be driven by concern for their own future.” ([Bohlen 8/18/1999](#))



August 31, 1999: Moscow Shopping Mall Is Bombed

In the first instance of what will later become a series of bombings during the month of September 1999, the Manezh, a luxury underground shopping mall in Moscow and within walking distance of the Kremlin, is bombed. Forty people are injured; only one is killed. ([BBC 9/1/1999](#))



Fall 1999: Explosives Were Kept Disguised As Sugar in Military Base Near Ryazan, Soldier Later Says

In March 13, 2000, the Russian independent weekly Novaya Gazeta publishes a bombshell that re-ignites the Ryazan incident controversy (see [September 22-24, 1999](#)). A soldier named Alexei Pinyaev describes how during the autumn of 1999 he was stationed near Ryazan, a city about 100 miles south of Moscow, and given guard duty at a military warehouse. He says it contained large sacks marked “sugar” but when he and another soldier surreptitiously opened one of the bags to sweeten their tea, the powder tasted vile. They showed the powder to their commander who then turned it over to a bomb expert. The expert identified it as hexogen. Immediately afterwards, several high-ranking FSB officers arrived from Moscow and accused the soldiers of divulging state secrets. To the soldiers’ relief, they were not sent to prison but simply told to forget the whole matter and they were later sent to Chechnya. The story causes an uproar, finally forcing the government to respond to the Ryazan controversy (see [March 23, 2000](#)). ([Satter 2003, pp. 30](#))



September 4, 1999: Bomb Targets Military Barracks in Dagestan, Next to Chechnya



Buinaksk Blast [Source:

Terror99.ru] A powerful bomb hits military housing for Russian soldiers in Buinaksk, Dagestan, killing 64. A car bomb is also discovered near a military hospital and defused. The attack is believed to have been committed by Chechen rebels in retaliation for Russian operations in Chechnya and neighboring Dagestan. ([BBC 9/5/1999](#); [Abdulayev 9/5/1999](#); [Gordon 9/6/1999](#); [Warren 9/6/1999](#))



September 9, 1999: Apartment Blast in Moscow Kills 94; Chechen Rebels Blamed



The Guryanov Street bombing.

[Source: *NTV/Terror.ru*] A powerful explosion levels the central portion of a block-long Moscow apartment building shortly after midnight, killing 94 people. The building is located on Guryanov Street in a working-class suburb, far from the heart of Moscow.

Yuri Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow, who has a degree in chemistry, identifies the probable explosive as hexagen, also called RDX. He says the attack was probably carried out by Chechen terrorists: "Visual signs suggest that it was a terrorist act similar to the one carried out in Buinaksk" (see [September 4, 1999](#)). Interfax reports that an anonymous caller declared that the explosion is "our response to air strikes against peaceful villages in Chechnya and Dagestan." ([Wines 9/10/1999](#); [Yablokova, Saradzhyan, and Kor 9/10/1999](#); [BBC 8/10/2000](#)) Another Moscow apartment building is bombed on September 13, killing over 100 (see [September 13, 1999](#)). Later in the month, explosives will be found in an apartment building in the nearby city of Ryazan. The Russian government will initially declare it a foiled bombing until the suspects arrested turn out to be FSB agents. The government will then claim it was merely a training exercise (see [September 22-24, 1999](#)). This will lead some to suspect that all three apartment bomb incidents this month were false flag attacks by the FSB (see [March 6, 2002](#), [December 30, 2003](#) and January 2004).



[September 13, 1999: Second Moscow Apartment Bombing Kills 118; Chechen Rebels Blamed](#)



The Kashirskoye Street bombing. [*Source: AP/Terror99.ru*] A powerful early-morning blast levels an apartment building on Kashirskoye Street, Moscow, killing 118 people. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and Moscow's mayor Yuri M. Luzhkov blame Chechen terrorists. ([Wines 9/13/1999](#); [BBC 9/13/1999](#)) Another Moscow apartment building was bombed on September 9, killing nearly 100 (see [September 9, 1999](#)). Later in the month, explosives will be found in an apartment building in the nearby city of Ryazan. The Russian government will initially declare it a foiled bombing until the suspects arrested turn out to be FSB agents. The government will then claim it was merely a training exercise (see [September 22-24, 1999](#)). This will lead some to suspect that all three apartment bomb incidents this month were false flag attacks by the FSB (see [March 6, 2002](#), [December 30, 2003](#) and January 2004).



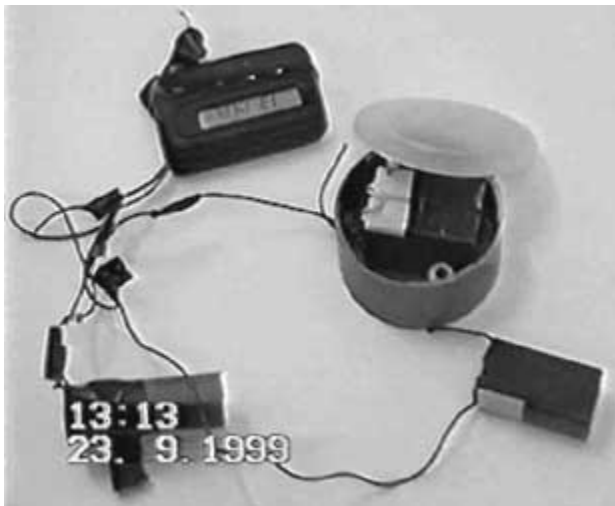
September 16, 1999: Truck Bomb in Southern Russia Kills 17



Apartment building in Volgondosk after blast [Source: BBC] A huge truck bomb outside an apartment block in Volgondosk, Southern Russia, shears off the front of the building, killing 17 people. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin declares, “We must stamp out this vermin.” Putin has blamed Chechen separatists for previous attacks. ([BBC 9/16/1999](#))



September 22-24, 1999: FSB Agents Plant Large Bomb in Ryazan: ‘Security Exercise’ or Terror Plot?



Ryazan bomb detonator. [Source: *Cryptome.org*] On the evening of September 22, 1999, several residents of an apartment block in Ryazan, a city about a hundred miles south of Moscow, observe three strangers at the entrance of their building. The two young men and a woman are carrying large sacks into the basement. The residents notice that the car’s plate has been partially covered with paper, although they can still see a Moscow license plate number underneath. They decide to call the local police. After several bombings of apartment buildings in Moscow earlier in the month (see [September 9, 1999](#) and [September 13, 1999](#)), their vigilance is understandable. When the police arrive, around 9:00 p.m., they uncover what appears to be huge bomb: three sacks of sugar filled with a granular powder, connected to a detonator and a timing device set for 5:30 a.m. The bomb squad

uses a gas testing device to confirm that it is explosive material: it appears to be hexagen, the military explosive that is believed to have been used to blow up two Moscow blocks. The residents are evacuated. Then the bomb carted away and turned over to the FSB. (In an apparent oversight, the FSB fails to collect the detonator, which is photographed by the local police.) The following morning, September 23, the government announces that a terrorist attack has been averted. They praise the vigilance of the local people and the Ryazan police. Police comb the city and find the suspects' car. A telephone operator for long-distance calls reports that she overheard a suspicious conversation: the caller said there were too many police to leave town undetected and was told, "Split up and each of you make your own way out." To the police's astonishment, the number called belongs to the FSB. Later this day, the massive manhunt succeeds: the suspects are arrested. But the police are again stunned when the suspects present FSB credentials. On Moscow's orders, they are quietly released. On September 24, the government reverses itself and now says the bomb was a dummy and the whole operation an exercise to test local vigilance. The official announcement is met with disbelief and anger. Ryazan residents, thousands of whom have had to spend the previous night outdoors, are outraged; local authorities protest that they were not informed. However, the suspicion of a government provocation is not widely expressed and press coverage fades after a few days. It is only several months later that an investigation by the independent weekly Novaya Gazeta reignites the controversy (see [February 20, 2000](#) and [Fall 1999](#)). The government's explanations will fail to convince skeptics (see [March 23, 2000](#)). The Ryazan incident later becomes the main reason for suspecting the government of having orchestrated previous bombings. The controversy is then widely reported in the international press. ([BBC 9/24/1999](#); [Saradzhyan 9/24/1999](#); [CNN 9/24/1999](#); [Englund 1/14/2000](#); [Reynolds 1/15/2000](#); [Reynolds 1/18/2000](#); [Womack 1/27/2000](#); [Sweeney 3/12/2000](#); [Matthews and Powell 4/3/2000](#); [Dettmer 4/17/2000](#); [Satter 4/30/2002](#); [Shihab 11/17/2002](#); [Satter 2003](#); [Medetsky 9/24/2004](#))



[December 19, 1999: Pro-Kremlin Parties Win Parliamentary Elections](#)

A coalition of pro-government parties unexpectedly wins elections to the Duma, the Russian parliament. The Chechnya War, according to all observers, was the main factor in turning the electorate in the Kremlin's favor. "The Chechen war—loudly criticized in the West for its brutal bombardments of civilians—has galvanized Russian public opinion and, according to most political experts, turned the national debate away from a search for social stability toward an endorsement for a strong state, headed by a strong leader. That shift in the national mood has been answered by [Russian Prime Minister Vladimir] Putin", says the New York Times. ([Bohlen 12/20/1999](#)) In addition, during the campaign, the opposition led by Yuri Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow, and Yevgeny Primakov, a former prime minister removed from office by President Yeltsin in early 1999, was pummeled by hostile media reports from pro-Kremlin news organizations, in particular Boris Berezovsky's ORT television network. ([Bohlen 12/15/1999](#))



[December 31, 1999: Yeltsin Resigns; Putin Now Acting President of Russia](#)

In a New Year's Eve televised speech that stuns Russians, President Boris Yeltsin announces his resignation and nominates Prime Minister Vladimir Putin as acting president. Yeltsin, who has spent much of the previous months in hospital for a heart condition and alcoholism, begs the Russian people for their forgiveness for his administration's failings. He also praises Putin as the best man to replace him: "Why hold on to power for another six months, when the country has a strong person, fit to be president, with whom practically all Russians link their hopes for the future today? Why should I stand in his way? Why wait for another six months?" Putin later promises: "There will be no power vacuum even for a moment." ([BBC 12/31/1999](#); [BBC 12/31/1999](#); [CNN 12/31/1999](#)) The BBC's correspondent later sums up a widespread belief concerning the change-over: "The theory goes that the Family [Yeltsin's entourage] decided to push Mr. Yeltsin out of office early, in order to make it easier for their chosen successor, Vladimir Putin to take over. Some even believe the Family deliberately started the war in Chechnya, in order to give Mr. Putin a platform, and a cause which would boost his popularity. In return, Mr. Putin would guarantee that the Family has protection from nosy Swiss and Russian investigators." ([Harding 1/8/2000](#)) In fact, one of Putin's first acts upon taking over is to sign a decree giving Yeltsin immunity from prosecution. ([Bohlen 1/1/2000](#))



[February 6, 2000: Apparent Mossad Attempt to Infiltrate Al-Qaeda Thwarted](#)

India's largest Newsweekly reports that it appears a recent Mossad attempt to infiltrate al-Qaeda failed when undercover agents were stopped on their way to Bangladesh by Indian customs officials. These 11 men appeared to be from Afghanistan, but had Israeli passports. One expert states, "It is not unlikely for Mossad to recruit 11 Afghans in Iran and grant them Israeli citizenship to penetrate a network such as bin Laden's. They would begin by infiltrating them into an Islamic radical group in an unlikely place like Bangladesh." ([Bhaumik 2/6/2000](#))



February 20, 2000: Ryazan Bomb Was Real, Local Police Tell Independent Newspaper



Yuri Tkachenko [*Source: Terror99.ru*] In its February 14-20, 2000, issue, the Russian newsweekly Novaya Gazeta reports that Ryazan police officers insist that the bomb they uncovered and defused was real. On September 22, 1999, a bomb was discovered in the city of Ryazan, about 100 miles south of Moscow. After the chief bomb suspects were discovered to be FSB agents, the government claimed the bomb was a dummy and the incident was a training exercise (see [September 22-24, 1999](#)). But the bomb-squad officer, Yuri Tkachenko, is adamant that it was a professionally-prepared, military-style bomb. He defends the accuracy of his sophisticated gas-testing device which identified the explosives as hexogen. The article provokes much comment in Russia but is ignored by the government. ([Satter 2003, pp. 29](#))



March 23, 2000: Broadcast on Ryazan Incident Fails to End Controversy



Alexander Zdanovich. [*Source: Terror99.ru*] A team of FSB officials, led by Alexander Zdanovich, agrees to a televised meeting with angry and suspicious residents of Ryazan, hoping to put down rumors of a government provocation and shore up the credibility of the official account. In September 1999 a bomb was found in the basement of a building in Ryazan and the people arrested for planting the bomb were discovered to be FSB agents. The government then claimed the incident was merely a training exercise, but residents suspect the FSB wanted to bomb the building to create a fake terrorist incident (see [September 22-24, 1999](#)). Zdanovich apologizes for the inconvenience suffered by Ryazan inhabitants but then suggests the renewed interest in the event is a campaign ploy: "For months, there was no interest and there were no publications. The theme was activated on the eve of the presidential election with the most fantastic details in order to accuse the FSB of planning a real explosion with the death of people. This is actively used in the political struggle." (The presidential election is only one week away.) A soldier named Alexei Pinyaev has claimed that he worked at a nearby base where hexogen was reportedly kept in sacks marked "sugar" (see [Fall 1999](#)). The commander of the base denies that there was any soldier named Pinyaev, but the Novaya Gazeta reporter who had found Pinyaev then shows pictures of him and plays a

recording of his interview. The FSB will not let its three agents appear in public or allow journalists to interview them. The broadcast does not allow any discussion of a possible connection between the Ryazan incident and the apartment bombings in Moscow earlier that month (see [September 9, 1999](#) and [September 13, 1999](#)). The FSB officials did not have good explanations for the fact that local authorities, including its own FSB office in Ryazan, were not informed of the supposed exercise, or for the lack of medical resources for the thousands of people forced to spend the night outdoors. According to David Satter, a long-time correspondent in Moscow for the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times who believes the Ryazan incident was a failed provocation, the broadcast only serves to increase the public's misgivings. ([Satter 2003, pp. 30, 261-264](#))



July 31, 2000: Politician Accuses Philippine Government and CIA of Manipulating Muslim Militant Group



Aquilino Pimentel. [Source: Publicity photo from Aquilino Pimentel website.] Senator Aquilino Pimentel, president of the Philippines Senate, accuses the Philippine government of collusion with the Muslim militant group Abu Sayyaf. He cites research that names two high police officers, Leandro Mendoza and Rodolfo Mendoza, as handlers for Abu Sayyaf informants. He also names Brig. Gen. Guillermo Ruiz, commanding general of the Filipino Marines in the early 1990s, as someone who colluded with the group, even splitting profits from illegal logging with them. Pimentel says, "My information is that the Abu Sayyaf partisans were given military intelligence services IDs, safe-houses, safe-conduct passes, firearms, cell phones and various sorts of financial support." He accuses officials of manipulating the Abu Sayyaf "in the game of divide and rule as far as the Muslim insurgency is concerned." He also accuses the CIA of helping to create the Abu Sayyaf, saying, "For what the Abu Sayyaf has become, the CIA must merit our people's condemnation. The CIA has sired a monster that has caused a lot problems for the country..." He says Abu Sayyaf's handlers "passed on military equipment and funds from the CIA and its support network..." He claims witnesses have come to him with evidence but are afraid of speaking out publicly. He concludes that "any Filipino who had a hand in the creation, training and equipping of the Abu Sayyaf should be held to account for high treason and other crimes." ([Pimentel 7/31/2000](#))

September 13, 2000: Indonesia Stock Exchange Bombing Blamed on Rebels Appears Linked to Indonesian Military Instead



Smoke rising from the bombed Jakarta stock exchange. [Source: RTV] A bombing at the stock exchange in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital city, kills 15. It is the fourth bombing in Jakarta since July, and the most deadly. Later the same month, two Indonesian soldiers are arrested and the Indonesian government claims they were the ones who planted the bomb. One of the soldiers belongs to Kopassus, Indonesia's notorious special forces unit, and the other belongs to a different elite unit. The two men will later be sentenced to life in prison for their roles in the bombing, but one will escape from prison before being sentenced. One of them will say his next targets include the US embassy and a Jakarta department store. The government says the two soldiers were rogues acting by themselves and hints that Islamist rebels from the province of Aceh are behind the bombing. However, little evidence of this is presented in court, and many analysts suspect elements in the military were involved as part of high-level political intrigues. The bombing takes place two days before the resumption of the corruption trial of Suharto, president of Indonesia until 1998, and there is strong speculation that the Suharto family is behind the bombing and the other recent Jakarta bombings to pressure the current Indonesian government not to act against Suharto. One of Suharto's sons is arrested for an alleged role in a bombing earlier that year, and then released. ([BBC 9/13/2000](#); [Asian Political News 8/27/2001](#)) In 2002, the Age, a major Australian newspaper, will comment about the stock exchange bombing, "Indonesian military elements were prepared to cause massive casualties and huge economic disruption in their own capital for the purposes of elite-level politics." ([McDonald 10/17/2002](#))

After October 12, 2000: Possible Links Between Cole Bombing and Yemeni Government Hinders US Investigation

Author Lawrence Wright will later write about the FBI's investigation of the USS *Cole* bombing in Yemen (see [October 12, 2000](#)), "The FBI was convinced that the [*Cole*] bombers had been tipped off about the arrival of the *Cole*, and they wanted to expand the investigation to include a member of the president's own family and a colonel in [the

Yemeni equivalent of the FBI]. There was scant interest on the part of the Yemen authorities in pursuing such leads.” Wright will also point out: “Yemen was a particularly difficult place to start a terrorist investigation, as it was filled with active al-Qaeda cells and with sympathizers at very high levels of government. On television, Yemeni politicians called for jihad against America. Just getting permission from the Yemeni government to go to the crime scene—the wounded warship in the Aden harbor—required lengthy negotiations with hostile officials.” Cooperation from the Yemen government is erratic at best. For instance, the Yemenis eventually show the FBI a videotape taken by a harborside security camera, but it appears the moment of the explosion has been edited out. ([Wright 2006, pp. 325](#); [Wright 7/10/2006](#).) Later, when the FBI is finally allowed to interview Fahad al-Quso, who the FBI believes is one of the main Cole plotters, a Yemeni colonel enters the room and kisses Quso on both cheeks. This is a recognized signal to everyone that al-Quso is protected. ([Wright 2006, pp. 330](#)) Between Yemeni obstructions, infighting between US officials (see [October 14-Late November, 2000](#)), and security concerns hindering movement, there will never be the same kind of investigation and trial as there was with the 1998 embassy bombings (see [August 7, 1998](#) and [February-July 2001](#)).



[December 24-30, 2000: Al-Qaeda Linked Group Bombings Kill Dozens in Indonesia and Philippines](#)



Damaged cars from the Christmas Eve bombings. [Source: *SBS Dateline*] Al-Qaeda affiliate Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) sets off two series of bombs, first in Indonesia, then in the Philippines. The Christmas Eve attacks in Indonesia comprise a series of 38 bombings in 11 cities and are directed against churches. Nineteen people are killed and over a hundred injured. ([LaMoshi 10/8/2004](#)) The attacks in the Philippines kill 22 and injure 120 in the country’s capital, Manila. The operation, involving attacks on a train, a bus, an abandoned petrol station, an airport car park, and a park, is apparently carried out by Indonesian JI operative Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi. ([BBC 2/27/2002](#)) Many militants are arrested after the attacks. The investigation leads to JI and al-Qaeda leader Hambali, a veteran Islamic fighter who was involved in the Bojinka plot (see [January 6, 1995](#)), is tied to 9/11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed (see [June 1994](#)), and attended an al-Qaeda Malaysia summit in 2000, which was monitored by Malaysia intelligence and the CIA (see [January 5-8, 2000](#)). Although

Hambali, an Indonesian, has lived in Malaysia since the mid-1990s, the authorities cannot find him and say that he has fled to Saudi Arabia (see [January 2001 and after](#)). ([Jakarta Post 2/7/2001](#)) JI's spiritual leader, Abu Bakar Bashir, is also arrested, but then released. ([CNN 2/26/2004](#)) Hambali will finally be captured in August 2003 in Thailand (see [August 12, 2003](#)). In February 2001, evidence will come out suggesting links between some of the bombers and the Indonesian military (see [February 20, 2001](#)).



[February 20, 2001: Evidence Suggests Indonesian Military Assisted Al-Qaeda Affiliate with Christmas Eve Bombings](#)



Location of the Indonesian cities hit in the Christmas Eve bombings. [Source: *SBS Dateline*] A series of 38 church bombings on Christmas Eve, 2000, killed 19 people in 11 Indonesian cities. The al-Qaeda affiliate Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) is blamed (see [December 24-30, 2000](#)). However, in February 2001, the respected Indonesian newsweekly Tempo publishes a cover story suggesting links between the bombings and the Indonesian military, the TNI. The article points out that Edi Sugiarto, who was quickly arrested and confessed to assembling 15 of the bombs used in the town of Medan, has long run a car repair shop in the province of Aceh, where a separatist group named GAM has been fighting for many years. Members of TNI and Indonesia's special forces, Kopassus, regularly went to his shop for repairs and just to hang out. As a result, GAM claimed he was a TNI lackey and burned down his shop and house in 1997. Phone records also indicate that Sugiarto called Fauzi Hasbi seven times before the bombings. Hasbi is a leader of JI, but Tempo outs him as an Indonesian government mole. In 2005, two years after Hasbi's death, the Australian television program *SBS Dateline* will provide additional evidence of Hasbi's long-time links to the TNI (see [1979-February 22, 2003](#)). Fasbi also called Jacob Tanwijaya, a businessman well connected with the TNI, 35 times. That businessman in turn talked on the phone to Lt. Col. Iwan Prilianto, a Kopassus special forces intelligence officer, over 70 times. However, these potential military links are never investigated and only Sugiarto and other alleged JI figures are arrested and later convicted for a role in the bombings. *SBS Dateline* will later report that "reputable sources claim [Sugiarto] was so severely tortured before his trial he would have admitted to anything." ([Tempo 2/20/2001](#); [SBS Dateline 10/12/2005](#)) Fasbi also made at least one call to another key figure in the bombings. The International Crisis Group, an international think tank, will later comment, "[I]t is hard to avoid the suspicion that someone in the armed forces must have known that at least the Medan part [of the bombings] was in the works..." ([International Crisis Group 12/11/2002](#))

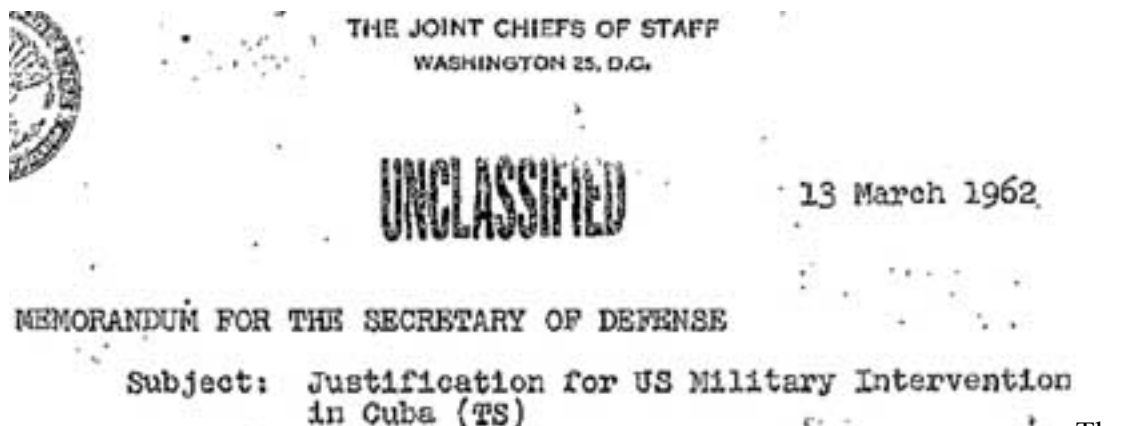


[Between March 2001 and May 2001: Richard Clarke: Bush Officials Discuss Creating Casus Belli for War with Iraq](#)

Counterterrorism “tsar” Richard Clarke later says that sometime between March and May, Bush administration officials discussed creating a *casus belli* for war with Iraq. In a 2007 interview with radio show host Jon Elliot, Clarke says: “Prior to 9/11 a number of people in the White House were saying to me you know this—this administration, particularly Cheney, but also Bush [and] people like Wolfowitz in the Pentagon, are really intent on going to war with Iraq. And this was the whispered conversations in the National Security Council staff.... Early, early on in the administration people I knew and trusted in the administration were saying to me, ‘You know. They’re really going to do it. They are going to go to war with Iraq.’ And I was flabbergasted. Why would you want to do that of all the things in the world that one could choose to do?... And how are we going to do it? How are we going to cause that provocation? And there was some discussion of ‘Well maybe [we’ll] keep flying aircraft over Iraq and maybe one day one of them will be shot down.’... And some of the talk I was hearing—in the March, April, May timeframe—‘Maybe we’ll do something that is so provocative and do it in such a way that our aircraft will be shot down.’ And then we’ll have an excuse to go to war with Iraq.” ([Clarke 1/11/2007](#) Sources: [Richard A. Clarke](#))



[April 24, 2001: Declassified Documents Reveal US Military Planned for Attacks Against Americans in 1960s to Justify Attacking Cuba](#)



The first lines of the declassified Northwoods document. [*Source: Public domain*] (click image to enlarge) James Bamford’s book, *Body of Secrets*, reveals a secret US government plan named Operation Northwoods. All details of the plan come from declassified military documents. ([Associated Press 4/24/2001](#); [Shane and Bowman 4/24/2001](#); [Hartung 4/26/2001](#); [Ruppe 5/1/2001](#)) The heads of the US military, all five Joint Chiefs of Staff, proposed in a 1962 memo to stage attacks against Americans and

blame Cuba to create a pretext for invasion. Says one document, “We could develop a Communist Cuban terror campaign in the Miami area, in other Florida cities and even in Washington.... We could blow up a US ship in Guantanamo Bay and blame Cuba. Casualty lists in US newspapers would cause a helpful wave of indignation.” In March 1962, Lyman L. Lemnitzer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, presented the Operation Northwoods plan to President John Kennedy and Defense Secretary Robert McNamara. The plan was rejected. Lemnitzer then sought to destroy all evidence of the plan. ([Shane and Bowman 4/24/2001](#); [Ruppe 5/1/2001](#)) Lemnitzer was replaced a few months later, but the Joint Chiefs continued to plan “pretext” operations at least through 1963. ([Ruppe 5/1/2001](#)) One suggestion in the plan was to create a remote-controlled drone duplicate of a real civilian aircraft. The real aircraft would be loaded with “selected passengers, all boarded under carefully prepared aliases,” and then take off with the drone duplicate simultaneously taking off near by. The aircraft with passengers would secretly land at a US military base while the drone continues along the other plane’s flight path. The drone would then be destroyed over Cuba in a way that places the blame on Cuban fighter aircraft. ([Harper's 7/1/2001](#)) Bamford says, “Here we are, 40 years afterward, and it’s only now coming out. You just wonder what is going to be exposed 40 years from now.” ([Insight 7/30/2001](#)) Some 9/11 skeptics will claim that the 9/11 attacks could have been orchestrated by elements of the US government, and see Northwoods as an example of how top US officials could hatch such a plot. ([Richman 3/27/2004](#))



[September 10, 2001: Army School Peacekeeping Report Says Mossad Can Target US Forces with False Flag Attacks](#)

A group of second-year students at the Army School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) produces a 68-page plan for sending peacekeepers to Israel in the event that the Israelis and Palestinians agree to a peace plan and the creation of a Palestinian state. Though the cover of the report indicates that the report has been written for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Maj. Chris Garver, a Fort Leavenworth spokesman, says that it was only an academic exercise. An article about the report appears in the Washington Times on September 10, 2001. The report refers to Israel’s armed forces as a “500-pound gorilla in Israel” that is “well armed and trained” and is “known to disregard international law to accomplish mission.” Of the Mossad, the report says: “Wildcard. Ruthless and cunning. Has capability to target US forces and make it look like a Palestinian/Arab act.” It describes Palestinian youths as “loose cannons; under no control, sometimes violent.” The SAMS officers write that US goals for the first 30 days of such a mission would be to “create conditions for development of Palestinian State and security of Israel”; ensure “equal distribution of contract value or equivalent aid” that would help legitimize the peacekeeping force and stimulate economic growth; “promote US investment in Palestine”; “encourage reconciliation between entities based on acceptance of new national identities”; and “build lasting relationship based on new legal borders and not religious-territorial claims.” ([Scarborough 9/10/2001](#))



September 12, 2001: Veteran CIA Operative Calls Exiled Iraqi General and Tells Him, 'It's Showtime'

Veteran CIA operative John Maguire calls long-time friend Mohammed Abdullah al-Shahwani, a former Iraqi general, and tells him, "It's showtime." Maguire and al-Shahwani worked together in the '90s on a covert plan to overthrow the Iraqi government, but the plan was never approved by the Clinton White House. Maguire believes the 9/11 attacks have provided the long awaited opportunity to remove Saddam Hussein. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 154](#))



October 10, 2001: Two Israelis Are Detained in Mexican Legislature Building after Behaving Suspiciously and Found To Be Carrying Arms

Two Israelis, Salvador Gersson Smike, 34, and Sar Ben Zui, 27, are arrested in the Mexican Congress Building in Mexico City. Smike is carrying a plastic 9 mm sophisticated Glock 9 mm pistol tucked into his underwear in his lower back. Glock pistols are made with a special plastic material and are very easy to smuggle. ([Bello 10/11/2001](#); [El Herald de Mexico \(Mexico City\) 10/11/2001](#); [Paez and Mejia 10/12/2001](#)) He also has with him a briefcase reported to contain 58 bullets, bomb-making materials, three detonators, and nine grenades. ([El Herald de Mexico \(Mexico City\) 10/11/2001](#)) The two were apprehended after ex-sugarcane workers, who were waiting for a congressional hearing, saw the two Israelis behaving strangely at around 4:00 p.m. They were reportedly photographing the workers below the belt. When the workers demanded that the two men identify themselves, the Israelis said they were press photographers. The workers dismissed their claims, overcame them, and then discovered they were armed with pistols and other high caliber arms. The two men had apparently also been seen the day before taking pictures. ([Paez and Mejia 10/12/2001](#)) Security guards soon arrived, disarmed the men, and took them to the security office. At around 6:00 p.m., it is learned that the two men are Israelis and that one of them, Salvador Gersson, is a former colonel of the Israeli Special Forces. ([Bello 10/11/2001](#); [Diario de Mexico \(Mexico City\) 10/11/2001](#)) Soon after, a man claiming to be a supervisor from the company, Desarrollo de Sistemas de Seguridad Privada (Private Security Systems Development), says the two men are employees at the firm and that they were taking pictures because they are "vacationing." The journalists who are present scoff at the claim. ([Bello 10/11/2001](#); [El Herald de Mexico \(Mexico City\) 10/11/2001](#)) After October 13, no additional information is reported about the incident.



Late November 2001 or December 2001: CIA Devises Covert Plan 'Anabasis' to Provide Pretext for Full-Scale War with Iraq

At the request of CIA director George Tenet, veteran CIA agents Luis (his full name has not been disclosed) and John Maguire devise a covert plan to overthrow the government of Saddam Hussein. Under the plan, code-named Anabasis, the CIA would send a team of paramilitary CIA officers to recruit disloyal Iraqi officers by offering them large chunks of cash. The CIA would conduct a disinformation campaign aimed at making Hussein believe that there was growing internal dissent. Hussein would become increasingly paranoid and eventually implement a repressive internal security policy, mostly likely involving the executions of suspected disloyal officers. In addition, the plan calls for "direct action operations" (understood to be a euphemism for the assassinations of key regime officials); disrupting the government's finances and supply networks; and conducting sabotage operations, such as the blowing up of railroads and communications towers. Finally, the plan includes creating a *casus belli* for an open military confrontation between the US and Iraq. The US would transport a group of exiles to Iraq, where they would take over an Iraqi base close to the Saudi border. When Hussein flies his troops south to handle the insurrection, the US would shoot his aircraft down under the guise of enforcing the US-imposed "no-fly" zone. The confrontation would then be used as a pretext for full-scale war. "The idea was to create an incident in which Saddam lashes out," Maguire later recalls. If the plan worked the US "would have a premise for war: we've been invited in." Implementing the plan would cost an estimated \$400 million. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 6-9, 154](#); [Borger 9/7/2006](#)) The plan will be canceled at the last minute by Gen. Tommy Franks (see [After January 2003](#)).



December 2, 2001: British Newspaper Reveals Secret US Plan to Invade Iraq after 'Stage-Managed Uprising'

The Observer publishes an article entitled, "Secret US Plan for Iraq War." It states that the US is planning to remove Saddam Hussein from power by giving armed support to Iraqi opposition forces. It also says that President Bush has ordered the CIA and US military to prepare plans for a military operation that could start "within months." The plan calls for "a combined operation with US bombers targeting key military installations while US forces assist opposition groups in the north and south of the country in a stage-managed uprising," and one version of the plan would have US forces fighting on the ground. The trigger for the attack would be Iraq refusing to allow UN inspectors back in. The article notes that justification for a war based on alleged Iraqi links to the 9/11 attacks is fading, but US officials believe they can make a case based on Iraqi possession of WMDs instead. One European military source who recently returned from General Tommy Franks's headquarters in Florida says: "The Americans are walking on water. They think they can do anything at the moment." ([Beaumont, Vulliamy, and Beaver 12/2/2001](#)) The claim that the US is planning a "stage-managed uprising" will later be borne out. Right around this time, some CIA planners come up with a plan code-named Anabasis to create an uprising in Iraq (see [Late November 2001 or December 2001](#)).



2002-2003: Chertoff Advises CIA Can Use Waterboarding and 'False Flag' Trickery on Detainees

The New York Times will later report that in 2002 and 2003, Michael Chertoff repeatedly advises the CIA about legality of some aggressive interrogation procedures. Chertoff is head of the Justice Department's criminal division at the time, and will later become the homeland security secretary. Chertoff advises that the CIA can use waterboarding. And the Times will claim he approves techniques "that did not involve the infliction of pain, like tricking a subject into believing he was being questioned by a member of a security service from another country." ([Johnston, Lewis, and Jehl 1/29/2005](#)) It will later be reported that the CIA tricked al-Qaeda leader Abu Zubaida into believing he was in the custody of the Saudis when in fact several US officials were merely pretending to be Saudis (see [Early April 2002](#)). Furthermore, Chertoff seems to have been advising on the legality of techniques used against Zubaida, strengthening allegations that 'false flag' trickery was used on him. "In interviews, former senior intelligence officials said CIA lawyers went to extraordinary lengths beginning in March 2002 to get a clear answer from the Justice Department about which interrogation techniques were permissible in questioning Abu Zubaida and other important detainees. 'Nothing that was done was not explicitly authorized,' a former senior intelligence said. 'These guys were extraordinarily careful.'" Chertoff also opposed one technique that "appeared to violate a ban in the law against using a 'threat of imminent death.'" ([Johnston, Lewis, and Jehl 1/29/2005](#)) This appears to match claims that the CIA proposed but did not implement a plan to place Zubaida into a coffin to convince him he was about to die (see [Between Mid-April and Mid-May 2002](#)).



January 2002: Planners of Covert Operation Against Iraq Told, 'Be Ready to Turn This Thing On by January 2003'

The CIA leadership informs the two veteran CIA agents working on Anabasis (see [Late November 2001 or December 2001](#)), CIA agents Luis (his full name has not been disclosed) and John Maguire, that the plan needs to be ready for implementation by January 2003. Maguire will later recall the message being: "Be ready to turn this thing on by January 2003. Be ready to go in a year. You got a year." Maguire understands this to mean that the decision to invade Iraq has been made. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 12](#))



January 13, 2002: Former German Minister Believes CIA Is Responsible for 9/11



Andreas von Bülow. *[Source: Public domain]* Andreas von Bülow, former German Minister for Research and Technology and a long-time member of German parliament, suggests in an interview that the CIA could have been behind the 9/11 attacks. He states: “Whoever wants to understand the CIA’s methods, has to deal with its main task of covert operations: Below the level of war, and outside international law, foreign states are to be influenced by inciting insurrections or terrorist attacks, usually combined with drugs and weapons trade, and money laundering.... Since, however, it must not under any circumstances come out that there is an intelligence agency behind it, all traces are erased, with tremendous deployment of resources. I have the impression that this kind of intelligence agency spends 90 percent of its time this way: creating false leads. So that if anyone suspects the collaboration of the agencies, he is accused of paranoia. The truth often comes out only years later.” ([Lebert and Thomma 1/13/2002](#)) In an example of covering tracks, Ephraim Halevy, head of Israel’s Mossad from 1998 until 2002, claims, “Not one big success of the Mossad has ever been made public” (see [February 5, 2003](#)). ([CBS News 2/5/2003](#))



February 16, 2002: Bush Directs CIA to Conduct Operations in Iraq

Bush signs an intelligence finding directing the CIA to conduct some of the operations that have been proposed in the Anabasis plan devised by veteran CIA agents Luis (full-name not disclosed) and John Maguire (see [Late November 2001 or December 2001](#)). The plan called for conducting covert operations within Iraq as part of a larger effort to overthrow Hussein’s government. ([Hamilton 4/17/2004](#); [Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 9](#) *Sources: Top officials interviewed by Washington Post editor Bob Woodward*)



March 2, 2002: Macedonian Police Stage the Murder of Seven Men, Falsely Claim They Were Islamist Militants Planning an Attack



Victims of the “Rastanski Lozja” action [*Source: New York Times*] Seven men are gunned down by Macedonian police near the country’s capital, Skopje. Authorities initially claim they were jihadists who took on the police in a gun battle. In an early report, “Interior Minister Ljube Boskovski said the dead men were ‘probably Pakistanis’ and had been planning attacks on vital installations and embassies.” ([BBC 3/2/2002](#)) However, doubts quickly develop about the official story. The BBC reports, “Sources inside the government have briefed journalists saying they believe that the group were illegal immigrants attempting to cross Macedonia on the well trodden path into Europe.” ([Wood 3/20/2002](#)) The full truth will emerge in April 2004 after a new government launches an investigation: it is revealed that the men, six from Pakistan and one from India, were innocent illegal immigrants who were lured over from Bulgaria, housed in Skopje for several days, and then shot in the middle of the night in an isolated spot. The conspiracy, which has become known as the “Rastanski Lozja” action, involved Boskovski and other politicians, as well as members of a special police unit. Their motive for the plot was to gain US support, in particular against rebellious ethnic Albanians. ([Associated Press 4/30/2004](#); [BBC 4/30/2004](#)) According to the New York Times, “In late 2001, after a six-month guerrilla war with ethnic Albanian rebels, relations between Macedonia’s nationalist government and the outside world were at a low ebb. Diplomats, government officials and investigators here have suggested that the government hoped to use the post-Sept. 11 campaign against terror to give the government a free hand in its conflict with the mostly Muslim ethnic Albanians.” ([Wood 5/17/2004](#))

March 6, 2002: Russian Billionaire Berezovsky Accuses FSB, Putin of Terror Plot



Boris Berezovsky. [Source: BBC] At a well-publicized press conference in London, where he now lives in self-imposed exile, Russian billionaire Boris Berezovsky accuses President Putin of involvement in an alleged FSB plot behind the 1999 apartment bombings (see [September 22-24, 1999](#), [September 9, 1999](#) and [September 13, 1999](#)). After an overview of many well-known facts about the bombings and the controversial Ryazan security exercise, as well as a documentary called “The Assassination of Russia”, Berezovsky introduces the testimony of Nikita Chekulin. According to Chekulin, an explosive expert who says he was recruited by the FSB, large quantities of hexogen were purchased through his research institute, the Russian Conversion Explosives Center (Rosconversvzryvtsester), and shipped under false labels in 1999-2000 out of military bases to cover organizations linked to the FSB. Chekulin says the FSB suppressed a governmental investigation into the scheme. “I am sure the bombings were organized by the FSB,” Berezovsky declares. “The FSB thought that [Russian President Vladimir] Putin would not be able to come to power through lawful democratic means.” (BBC 3/6/2002; Steele and Traynor 3/6/2002; Hoffman 3/6/2002; Gevorkyan and Kara-Murza 3/6/2002; Monitor (Jamestown Foundation) 3/6/2002; SBS 5/21/2003)



April, 2002: Many Russians Believe Terror Plot Allegations, Poll Shows

A poll shows that suspicions of secret services involvement in the 1999 apartment bombings (see [September 9, 1999](#) and [September 13, 1999](#)) are widespread in Russia. Following Russian billionaire Boris Berezovsky’s allegations made in recent weeks (see [March 6, 2002](#)), six percent of Russians questioned in the poll say they believe the Russian FSB was behind the apartment bombings and another 37 percent believe it is a possibility. Most respondents say they would like Russian television to show a Berezovsky-sponsored documentary on the subject. (Agence France-Presse 4/17/2002)



May 16, 2002: CIA Operative Hurt While Posing as Terrorist Bomber in Philippines?

US citizen Michael Meiring is suspected of being a CIA operative after injuring himself in an explosion in his own hotel room. Meiring claimed a grenade was thrown into his room, but a Philippine government investigation determined the center of the blast came from an assembled bomb kept in a metal box owned by Meiring. Hotel employees said Meiring told them for weeks not to touch the box while cleaning the room. Additionally, an ID card with his picture on it found in his room lists him as an officer in the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), a Muslim rebel militant group. ([Greenblatt 12/2/2004](#)) One hour after the bombing in his room, a bomb explodes in a marketplace in the same region, injuring four people. ([Agence France-Presse 5/16/2002](#)) In the two months prior to this explosion in his room, there were several other other explosions in the same region, killing 37 people and injuring 170 more. ([Arguillas 5/30/2003](#)) In 2003, a group of Philippine soldiers will mutiny, in part because they believe these bombings were done with the secret approval of the Philippine government, and not done by rebel groups as the government claims (see [July 27-28, 2003](#)). A number of Philippine officials speculate Meiring may have been a CIA agent. Those who knew him said that he referred to himself as a CIA agent, but said it stood for "Christ In Action." He had frequently visited the Philippines for at least ten years. ([Arguillas 5/30/2003](#)) He claimed to be a treasure hunter, and had a company called Parousia International Trading (in Christian theology, Parousia is a term for the second coming of Christ). He also had ties to right wing extremists in the US (see [1992-1993](#)). He was said to be very well connected in the Philippines, being visited in his hotel room prior to the explosion by congressmen, a governor, and military officials. He was also connected to militants in the MNLF, Abu Sayyaf, and other groups. He was said to have met with top leaders of these militant groups starting in 1992 (see [1992-1993](#)). One source who knew him said that earlier in the year he had predicted a series of bombings and that his predictions "always came true." ([Arguillas 5/31/2003](#)) Meiring was already a major suspect in the production and distribution of counterfeit US Treasury bills. Over the last few years, billions of dollars worth of fake US Treasury bills were confiscated in the region. ([McGirk 2/26/2001](#); [de Leon and Francisco 5/27/2002](#)) Four days after the explosion, FBI agents take him out of the hospital where he was recovering from severe burns and amputations. According to the Philippine Immigration Deputy Commissioner, agents of the US National Security Council then take him to the capital of Manila. The Financial Times will later report that he returns to the US and is handed over to the CIA. ([Zumel-Sicat and Andrade 5/30/2002](#); [Financial Times 7/12/2002](#); [Klein 8/15/2003](#)) The Guardian will later comment, "Local officials have demanded that Meiring return to face charges, to little effect. BusinessWorld, a leading Philippine newspaper, has published articles openly accusing Meiring of being a CIA agent involved in covert operations 'to justify the [recent] stationing of American troops and bases in Mindanao.' The Meiring affair has never been reported in the US press." ([Klein 8/15/2003](#)) In 2004, a Houston TV station will trace Meiring back to the US, where he still lives, despite the Philippine government wanting him to be extradited to face a variety of charges related to the explosion (see [December 2, 2004](#)).



Summer 2002: CIA Begins Moving Iraqi Operatives into US to Train for Anabasis Plan

The CIA begins bringing exiled Iraqi fighters into the US to begin training for the Anabasis project (see [Late November 2001 or December 2001](#)). Some of the Iraqis are flown in on secret flights using the same planes that are involved in the CIA's extraordinary renditions (see [After September 11, 2001](#)) Other exiles enter the US with CIA-provided passports. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 155](#))



August 16, 2002: US Military Plans New Strategies, Including Conducting Secret Operations Aimed at 'Stimulating Reactions' Among Terrorists and States

The Defense Science Board authors a report titled "Special Operations and Joint Forces in Countering Terrorism" recommending an increase of more than \$7 billion in the Pentagon's budget. It says the war on terrorism is a "real war" and describes the enemy as "committed, resourceful and globally dispersed... with strategic reach." The US will have to wage "a long, at times violent, and borderless war" that "requires new strategies, postures and organization," it adds. The report includes suggestions to develop the capability to tag key terrorist figures with special chemicals so they can be tracked by laser; a proposal to create a special SWAT team charged with secretly seeking and destroying chemical, biological and nuclear weapons anywhere in the world; and a plan to establish a "red team" known as the Proactive, Preemptive Operations Group, (P2OG), which would conduct secret operations aimed at "stimulating reactions" among terrorists and states suspected of possessing weapons of mass destruction. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#); [Arkin 10/27/2002](#); [Isenberg 11/5/2002](#))

Proactive, Preemptive Operations Group, (P2OG) - The unit would provoke terrorist cells into action, perhaps by stealing their money or tricking them with fake communications, in order to expose them. The exposed cells would then be taken care of by "quick-response" teams. The US would use the revelation of such cells as an opportunity to hold "states/sub-state actors accountable" and "signal to harboring states that their sovereignty will be at risk." The P2OG would require at least \$100 million and about 100 people, including specialists in information operations, psychological operations, computer network attack, covert activities, signal intelligence, human intelligence, special operations forces and deception operations. According to the DSB, it should be headed by the Special Operations Executive in the White House's National Security Council. But according to sources interviewed by United Press International (UPI), people in the Defense Department want to see the group under the Pentagon's authority. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#); [Arkin 10/27/2002](#); [Isenberg 11/5/2002](#))

Tagging terrorists - Intelligence operatives would penetrate terrorist cells and tag leaders' clothes with chemicals that would make them trackable by a laser. The agents would also collect DNA samples from objects and papers that are handled by the targets. Information

about the terrorist's DNA would be kept in a database. The program would cost \$1.7 billion over a 5-year period beginning in 2004. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Special SWAT team - The SWAT Team would consist of special forces soldiers whose specialty would be searching and destroying nuclear, chemical or biological weapons sites anywhere in the world. They would also be trained to offer protection to US soldiers operating nearby and be responsible for "consequence management," like enacting quarantines. The program would cost about \$500 million a year and would be headed by US Special Operations Command. To effectively detect the presence of such weapons, the DSB advocates allocating about \$1 billion a year on the research and development of new sensor and "agent defeat" technologies. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Expanding US Special Forces - The panel recommends increasing the size of US Special Forces by about 2 percent a year. It also proposes that more special forces operations be conducted jointly with conventional forces. Its budget should be increased by "billions," the report also says. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Panel to speculate on possible terrorist attack scenarios - A panel of roughly 24 creative, highly respected analysts would be convened to speculate on the nature of future terrorists attacks against the US. The report recommends allocating \$20 million a year for the program. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Intelligence Reserve - A \$100 million-a-year reserve program would be established that would put former intelligence retirees on call to assist with intelligence tasks and to participate in counterterrorism exercises when needed. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#); [Isenberg 11/5/2002](#))

Addition of 500 people who would focus on identifying characteristics of potential adversaries - \$800 million would be spent on the addition of over 500 people to existing military and intelligence agencies who would "focus on understanding effects of globalization, radicalism, cultures, religions, economics, etc., to better characterize potential adversaries." ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Increase budget of Joint Warfare Analysis Center (JWAC) and Joint Forces Command's net assessment center - \$200 million more would be allocated to the Joint Warfare Analysis Center and Joint Forces Command's net assessment center. JWAC is a cell of about 500 planners and target analysts who work in Dahlgren, Va. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Increase surveillance and reconnaissance budgets - The panel envisions infusing \$1.6 billion per year into intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance budgets over the next six years. Spending would be focused on tying together unmanned aerial vehicles, manned platforms, space-based sensors and databases. A portion of the funds would also be used to develop "a rich set of new ground sensor capabilities" aimed at the surveillance of small terrorist cells. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Urban Training Center - A dedicated urban training range would be constructed on the West Coast emphasizing "small unit action, leadership initiative and flexibility." Relatively low-level soldiers would also be trained on how to determine the logistics of the back-up fire they need while they are in battle. The program would need \$300 million a year for the next six years. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#))

Database providing 3-d view of most of the cities of the world - The report recommends developing a detailed database of most of the cities in the world which would allow soldiers to view a three-dimensional display of the cities including "buildings [doors and

windows included],... streets and alleys and underground passages, obstacles like power lines and key infrastructure like water and communications lines,” the UPI reports. ([Board 8/16/2002](#); [Hess 9/26/2002](#)) Critics warn that the changes proposed by the report would allow the military to engage in covert activities currently handled by the CIA. However unlike the CIA, the military would not be subject to Congressional oversight. But William Schneider Jr, the DSB chairman, downplays those concerns. “The CIA executes the plans but they use Department of Defense assets,” Schneider says, adding that his board’s recommendations do not advocate any changes to US policies banning assassinations, or requiring presidents to approve US covert operations in advance. He also insists that such changes would not preclude congressional oversight. ([Isenberg 11/5/2002](#))



[August 31, 2002: Indonesian Military Shoots US Teachers, Blames Attack on Rebel Group](#)



Patsy Spier, an American teacher wounded in the attack. Her husband Rick Spier was killed. [*Source: US Department of Justice*] A group of US teachers traveling in the Indonesian province of Papua (also known as Irian Jaya) are ambushed on a jungle road. Two American teachers and one Indonesian teacher are killed, and eight American teachers are injured. The ambush takes place on a road owned by the company Freeport-McMoRan, which owns an extremely lucrative gold and copper mine nearby. The road is tightly controlled by the Indonesian military, the TNI, and a military check point is only 500 yards away. The TNI quickly blames the killings on the Free Papua Movement (OPM), a separatist group in the province. But a preliminary Indonesian police investigation finds that “there is a strong possibility” the ambush was carried out by members of the Indonesian military. Other classified reports presented to Congress by the CIA and FBI suggest the TNI was behind the ambush. ([Priest 6/22/2003](#)) The weeks later, a US intelligence report suggests that senior Indonesian military officials discussed an operation against Freeport shortly before the ambush (see [Mid-September 2002](#)). ([Nakashima and Sipress 11/3/2002](#)) Matthew P. Daley, deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, later says: “The preponderance of evidence indicates to us that members of the Indonesian army were responsible for the murders in Papua. The question of what level and for what motive did these murders take place is of deep interest to the United States.” At the time, over 2,000 security personnel were guarding the Freeport mine, and this has been a lucrative

business for the TNI. However, Freeport had made recent comments in the local media that they were planning on cutting the security forces. The Washington Post will report in 2003 that the FBI is investigating the possibility that the ambush was designed to make Freeport increase its payments to the TNI. The Post will additionally report US officials also believe that “elements of the military may have wanted to frame the [OPM] in the hope of prompting the State Department to add the group to the department’s terrorist list. If the separatists were listed as a terrorist group, it would almost guarantee an increase in US counterterrorism aid to the Indonesian military.” ([Priest 6/22/2003](#)) In 2006, the New York Times will report that, despite all the evidence, “Bush administration officials [have] consistently sought to absolve the Indonesian military of any link to the killings.” In November 2005, the US officially restores ties to the TNI despite the unresolved nature of the killings. The ties had been cut for 12 years due to widespread human rights abuses by the TNI. Also in 2006, Anthonius Wamang, the main suspect in the killings who was recently arrested, will confess that he did shoot at the teachers, but so did three men in Indonesian military uniforms. Furthermore, he says he was given his bullets by a senior Indonesian soldier. Wamang is said to belong to the OPM, but a human rights group connects him to the TNI. ([Bonner 1/14/2006](#)) After the Bali bombings less than two months later (see [October 12, 2002](#)), the Asia Times will point to the Papua ambush to suggest that elements in the TNI could have had a role in the Bali bombings as well. ([Fawthrop 11/7/2002](#))



Fall 2002: CIA Operation in Athens Frames Iraqi Security Officials in Arms Bust

In Athens, a number of Iraqi security officials get snagged in an arms bust arranged by the CIA. The CIA made it appear as though the Iraqis were buying guns for terrorists. The operation was part of an effort by the CIA’s Iraq Operations Group to exacerbate the tension between the US and Saddam Hussein in the lead-up to war with Iraq. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 161](#))



September 2002: Anabasis Team Begins Training in Nevada Desert

The CIA’s Anabasis operatives begin training in the Nevada Desert at the Energy Department’s nuclear test site. About 80 Iraqis take part in the training. They name their squad Scorpions 77 Alpha after a special forces unit Saddam had disbanded. A second team comprised of about 15 Arab fighters, mostly Egyptians and Lebanese, also train at the site. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 153-156](#))



Mid-September 2002: US and Australian Intelligence Learn Indonesian Military Likely behind False Flag Attack on US Teachers; No Action or Warnings Result

On August 31, 2002, a group mostly made up of American teachers near a mine owned by the US company Freeport-McMoRan are ambushed in the jungles of the Indonesian province of Papua; 3 teachers are killed and 12 injured (see [August 31, 2002](#)). According to a Washington Post article published on November 2, 2002, a US intelligence report two weeks later strongly suggests the Indonesian military is behind the killings. According to a US official and another US source, shortly before the ambush, a discussion involving the top ranks of Indonesia's military (the TNI) take place. Influential commander-in-chief Endriartono Sutarto is involved. Sutarto and the other military leaders discuss discrediting a Papuan separatist group, the Free Papua Movement (OPM). This information is based on a "highly reliable" source said to be knowledgeable about the high-level military conversations, as well as communications intercepts by the Australian government. The discussions do not detail a specific attack nor do they call explicitly for the killing of foreigners, but they clearly target the Freeport company. Subordinates could understand the discussions as an implicit command to take violent action against Freeport. The report suggest the Indonesian military may have wanted to blame an attack on the OPM in order to prod the US to declare the OPM a terrorist group. FBI Reaches Similar Conclusions - In early October, the FBI briefs State Department and US embassy officials in Indonesia and reveal that their investigation indicates the Indonesian military was behind the ambush, although the determination is not conclusive. Later Reactions in US - Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt) will later say, "It should surprise no one that the Indonesian army may have been involved in this atrocity. It has a long history of human rights violations and obstruction of justice. The fact that the perpetrators apparently believed they could murder Americans without fear of being punished illustrates the extent of the impunity." Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz will say he is concerned about the allegations, but suggests the US should nonetheless reestablish ties with the Indonesian military, which had been suspended due to human rights violations. The Indonesian military will later deny any involvement in the killings. ([Nakashima and Sipress 11/3/2002](#))

Indonesian Police also Blame Military - However, the Washington Post also reports around the same time that the Indonesian police have concluded in a secret report that the Indonesian military is responsible. They blame Kopassus, the military's special forces unit, for carrying out the ambush. ([Nakashima and Sipress 10/27/2002](#))

No Warnings before Bali Bombings - But neither the US nor Australian governments give any kind of public warning that the Indonesian military could be targeting and killing Westerners, and no known action is taken against the Indonesian government. On October 12, 2002, over 200 people, mostly Westerners, will be killed in bombings on the island of Bali (see [October 12, 2002](#)). While the al-Qaeda affiliate group Jemaah Islamiyah will be blamed for the bombings, a retired Indonesian military officer will allegedly confess to having a role but not be charged (see [October 16, 2002](#)), and several top Indonesian military generals will also be suspected in media reports (see [October 28, 2002](#)).

[September 27, 2002: French Court Ruling Backs Allegations of Widespread False Flag Attacks in Algeria](#)



Habib Souaïdia. [Source: Public domain] Algerian general Khaled Nezzar loses a libel suit in France against Habib Souaïdia, a former lieutenant in the Algerian army. Souaïdia claimed in a 2001 book that in the 1990s the Algerian army frequently massacred Algerian civilians and then blamed Islamic militants for the killings. The French court rules that the contents of Souaïdia's book are "legitimate." The court declares that it could not judge Algeria's history but Souaïdia had acted in good faith in making his allegations. ([Agence France-Presse 9/27/2002](#); [Godoy 9/30/2002](#)) Souaïdia served in the Algerian army until 1996 and took part in operations against Islamic militants. Nezzar is considered the real power in Algeria, still ruling behind a facade of civilian rule ever since the early 1990s. Several former Algerian officers living in exile testified in court and corroborated Souaïdia's statements. For instance:

- Souaïdia told the French court, "In the beginning we spoke about restoring order in the country. But very soon the generals made of us an army of wild murderers.... We had permission to kill whoever we wanted to for nothing at all." He pointed to Nezzar in the courtroom and said that "at the same time they were counting the millions of dollars they had stolen from the people."
- Former colonel Mohammed Samraoui testified that "the Algerian army used all means to attack the Islamic rebellion: blackmail, corruption, threats, killings...we used terrorist methods to attack terrorism even before it had appeared."
- Former officer Ahmed Chouchene said that soldiers were told they could kill civilians as much as they liked as long as they could "produce a false explanation for the killings." They were taught that "their role was not to apply law, but to circumvent it." ([Godoy 9/30/2002](#))

Late September 2002: CIA Strikes Deal with Iraqi Religious Leader to Exploit High-Level Contacts in Iraqi Government for Intelligence

The CIA flies the leader of Iraq's Sufi movement (Sufism is a mystic tradition of Islam) to Washington to discuss his possible involvement in the Anabasis project. One night at Marrakesh, a popular Moroccan restaurant, the Sufi asks Luis and John Maguire, the two CIA operatives who are heading the project, if the US is certain that it will remove Saddam Hussein. "You're not just going to come to Iraq, poke Saddam in the eye, and leave, are you?" Maguire assures him that the US is serious this time. The CIA agrees to pay him \$1 million a month in exchange for information from high-level Iraqi officials. Soon after the agreement, CIA officers in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq begin receiving high-quality intelligence from Iraqi insiders, including information on the movements of Saddam Hussein. The sources include Iraqi military officials who are more loyal to the Sufi leader than to Hussein. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 157](#))



(October 2002): CIA Station Chief in Jordan Refuses Order to Engage in Sabotage against Iraqi Vehicles

The Iraqi Operations Group, headed by Luis (his full name has not been disclosed) and John Maguire, orders the CIA station chief in Amman Jordan to conduct a sabotage operation against a fleet of cars used by Iraqi officials in Jordan. They want the CIA in Amman to pour contaminants into the fuel tanks of the vehicles so as to destroy their engines. But the station chief refuses, telling agency headquarters in a cable that he won't participate in "juvenile college pranks." Maguire is livid with anger. "We have a directive from the president of the United States to do this," Maguire says. "So shut the f_ck up and do this! We're not interested in your grousing as to whether or not this is a wise move or not. The president has made a decision!" The operation never takes place. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 160-161](#))



October 2-November 12, 2002: Mastermind of Series of Alleged Al-Qaeda Funded Bombings in Philippines Appears to Be Government Mole



Abdalmukim Edris, standing with his head bowed in the back, and Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, sitting in the front in purple. [Source: Erik de Castro / Reuters / Corbis] Beginning on October 2, 2002, a series of bombings take place in and around Zamboanga City in the southern Philippines. This region is a center of Islamist militancy in a majority Christian country. During the month of October, bombs explode outside a restaurant near a military camp (killing four, including a US Green Beret commando), at the entrance to a Catholic shrine, at a bus terminal (killing seven), and inside two department stores (killing seven). A total of 21 are killed and more than 200 are injured.

Arrest of Alleged Mastermind - On November 14, Abdalmukim Edris is arrested and is said to have been the bomb-maker behind all the blasts. Edris is an alleged member of the Abu Sayyaf, a militant group based in the region. Two days after his arrest, he is paraded in front of cameras and stands in handcuffs directly behind Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as she calls him “the No. 1 bomber of the Abu Sayyaf.” He admits that he and his team were already casing targets to be bombed later in the month, including the US embassy in Manila. The head of the military says that Edris was trained by two Yemeni “VIPs from al-Qaeda” in the southern Philippines in the month before the 9/11 attacks. It is later reported that another arrested Abu Sayyaf militant, Khair Mundus, received around \$90,000 from al-Qaeda militants in Saudi Arabia to fund the bombings. (Teves 11/14/2002; Gomez 5/14/2004)

Mastermind Appears to Be Mole - But in July 2003, Edris will escape from a high-security prison with two other militants (see [July 14, 2003](#)). One week after the escape, the Philippine Daily Inquirer will report that Edris has long-time links to the Philippine military and police. A police intelligence source says that he has been a government asset since 1994. (Cruz 7/23/2003) Edris will be killed about two weeks after this report. He allegedly is killed hours after he was arrested while trying to wrestle a gun from a soldier. Some will allege that he was deliberately killed in order to prevent him from revealing what he knew (see [October 12, 2003](#)).

Another Dubious Mastermind - Another alleged mastermind of the Zamboanga bombings, Mohammed Amin al-Ghafari, is arrested on November 8, 2002, and then quickly deported, despite allegations that he helped fund the 1995 Bojinka plot and had major terrorist links. He is said to have links to Philippine intelligence and high-level government protection (see [October 8-November 8, 2002](#)).



October 16, 2002: Former Indonesian Military Officer Reportedly Confesses Role in Bali Bombings

The Washington Post reports that a former Indonesian military official has confessed to assembling the main bomb that blew up a nightclub in Bali, Indonesia, several days earlier (see [October 12, 2002](#)). According to an unnamed Indonesian security official, former Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Dedy Masrukhin says he regrets the loss of life, but will not disclose who ordered him to make the bomb. He was discharged from the military in September 2001 for involvement in a drug case. He received explosives training in the US while he was still in the military. However, less than 24 hours later, an Indonesian military spokesman acknowledges Masrukhin was intensively interrogated but denies that he confessed. ([Jakarta Post 10/16/2002](#); [Nakashima and Sipress 10/16/2002](#)) Several days later, the Jakarta Post, an English language newspaper in Indonesia, reports that their sources say “the police received orders to release [Masrukhin] although suspicions of his link to the Bali blasts remain strong.” ([Siboro and Suryana 10/21/2002](#)) Interestingly, the London Times reports that the explosives used in the bombings were bought from the Indonesian military (see [September-October 2002](#)). ([Fielding, Campbell, and Rufford 10/20/2002](#))



November 2002: CIA Officials Discuss Plans for Sabotage in Iraq at Secret Meeting in London

CIA station chiefs from all over the Middle East meet at the United States Embassy in London for a secret conference. Deputy Director for Operations James Pavitt has called the meeting because certain people in the CIA are disappointed with a lack of action in the field on Iraq-related tasks. John Maquire of the Iraqi Operations Group has repeatedly criticized field operatives for being too timid (see, e.g., [October 2002](#)). ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 161](#)) “After several worldwide cables from IOG [Iraqi Operations Group], the Near East front office, and the DDO’s office, we found little movement in the field on the Iraq issue.... This lack of movement on the Iraq target triggered the call by the ADDO [the assistant deputy director of operations] for the London meeting,” an official from the CIA’s Iraqi Operations Group (IOG) later tells author James Risen. The problem is that many CIA officers, especially those in the Near East division, simply do not support the administration’s plan to invade Iraq. So one of the meeting’s objectives is to get everyone on board. The IOG official explains: “We kept saying that the president has decided we are going to war, and if you don’t like it, quit.” During the meeting, the

officials say that the agency is interested in developing a plan for sabotage that will undermine the Iraqi regime. The chief of the IOG describes a plan to prevent the shipment of goods to Saddam Hussein and his family with the hope that it might cause Hussein to become paranoid and distrustful of those around him. One young station chief suggests sinking a ferry that imports these goods into Iraq from neighboring Arab countries. An IOG official present at the meeting will later tell Risen that this plan is dismissed because the vessel also transports passengers. But two station chiefs tell Risen that they left the meeting with the impression that IOG officials were open to the plan. Risen also reports in his book that another plan for sabotage was to equip “low-level Iraqi agents with special spring-loaded darts that they could use to destroy the windshields of cars owned by members of the Iraqi regime. Large supplies of the darts were later delivered to forward CIA stations, but nothing was ever done with them.” ([Risen 2006, pp. 183-184](#))



[December 11, 2002: Indonesian Military Still Has Well-Connected Mole Inside Al-Qaeda Affiliate, Raising Questions about Bali Bombings](#)



Syafrie Syamsuddin. [Source: *Kuantanutama.com*] The International Crisis Group (ICG), an international think tank, publishes a report that identifies a “curious link” between the al-Qaeda affiliate group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and the Indonesian military, the TNI. ([International Crisis Group 12/11/2002](#)) PBS Frontline will later say that Sidney Jones, the author of the report, “is widely considered to know more about terrorism in Indonesia than anyone.” ([PBS Frontline 4/2007](#)) The ICG says the connection is “strong enough to raise the question of how much the TNI knew about Jemaah Islamiyah” before the October 2002 Bali bombings. The report outs Fauzi Hasbi, a long-time JI leader, as an Indonesian government mole. It says that Hasbi has maintained links with Major-General Syafrie Syamsuddin since the late 1970s. “Hasbi maintains regular communication with Major-General Syafrie Syamsuddin to this day and is known to be close to the National Intelligence Agency head Hendropriyono.” Furthermore, an army intelligence officer interviewed by ICG had Hasbi’s number programmed into his cell phone, and actually called Hasbi and spoke to him while in the presence of the ICG investigator. And remarkably, Hasbi himself has claimed that he has treated Hambali, a top JI and al-Qaeda leader believed to have masterminded the 2002 Bali bombings, like a son. Hasbi and Hambali lived next door to each other in a small Malaysian village until

late 2000 (see [April 1991-Late 2000](#)). ([International Crisis Group 12/11/2002](#); [Munro 12/12/2002](#)) Hasbi is killed in mysterious circumstances two months later (see [1979-February 22, 2003](#)).



[January 2003: CIA Moves Anabasis Team to Jordan](#)

The CIA's Iraq Operations Group flies the Anabasis team from their Nevada training site to Jordan to wait for a green light from the White House. If the signal is given, the team—comprised of more than 100 members—will be flown to an isolated Iraqi military base near the Saudi border where they will announce a coup on the radio and call on other military units to join them. Then, when Hussein flies his troops south to quell the insurrection, the US Air Force will shoot them down for violating the no-fly zone. The confrontation will then be used as a pretext for full-scale war (see also [Late November 2001 or December 2001](#)). But the operation will be opposed by General Franks, and the Anabasis team will never receive the signal (see [After January 2003](#)). ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 166](#))



[After January 2003: Gen. Franks Rejects Anabasis Plan](#)

Execution of the Anabasis project (see [Late November 2001 or December 2001](#)) is blocked by General Tommy Franks. Journalists Michael Isikoff and David Corn write in their book *Hubris* that Franks “didn’t want a sideshow interfering with his carefully designed invasion plans.” Instead the Anabasis team, which has been waiting in Jordan (see [January 2003](#)), will help US forces cut roads and establish ties with local mullahs when the invasion begins. ([Isikoff and Corn 2006, pp. 211](#) Sources: [John Maguire](#))



[February 5, 2003: Recently Retired Head of Mossad Says His Agency Has Had Many Secret Big Successes](#)

Ephraim Halevy, head of the Mossad from 1998 to 2002, is interviewed by 60 Minutes. He denies allegations that Israel was behind the 9/11 attacks, saying, “Needless to say, this is not just a big lie. I think this is really also a travesty of any vestige of truth.” He also suggests that some Arab governments may have been subtly promoting this allegation to hurt Israel. But at the same time, he hints that the Mossad has had great secret successes. He claims, “Not one big success of the Mossad has ever been made public.” Equally cryptically, when asked what moment he is most proud of, he replies, “This is something I can’t talk about unfortunately. I am sorry about that.” ([CBS News 2/5/2003](#))



[May 12, 2003: Suspicious Circumstances in Riyadh Bombings Indicate Government Collusion with Al-Qaeda, American Contractors Say](#)

The May 12, 2003, Riyadh suicide bombings, which left 35 dead, targeted several housing compounds for Westerners, include one for Vinnell Corporation employees (see [May 12, 2003](#)). (Vinnell had a large contract to train Saudi forces.) Some former Vinnell employees, who are predominantly former American servicemen, will later allege in interviews and court documents that the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG), the elite force which protects the royal family, colluded with the bombers to facilitate the attacks. They claim that an exercise organized by the National Guard removed most security staff for the day of the bombing, suggesting foreknowledge. They also claim that warnings were ignored and that security was inexplicably lax. ([Hollingsworth 5/16/2004](#)) They will then sue Vinnell and Saudi Arabia for negligence. ([Hollingsworth 5/8/2005](#))



[May 12, 2003: Saudi Arabia Bombing Hardens Saudi Government's Stance Toward Al-Qaeda](#)



Reconstruction begins after the Riyadh bombings. [Source: *US Rewards for Justice*] (click image to enlarge) Saudi Arabia is attacked by three suicide bombings in the capital of Riyadh. At least 34 people are killed. Some evidence suggests that elements within the Saudi government were complicit with or behind the attacks (see [May 12, 2003](#)). The Saudi government had taken very little action against al-Qaeda prior to this. However, it appears to more aggressively combat al-Qaeda afterward. ([Meyer 7/16/2004](#)) In early 2006, it will be reported that the Saudis aggressively combat al-Qaeda within Saudi Arabia, but do next to nothing to stop al-Qaeda or its financing outside of the country (see [January 15, 2006](#)).



July 27-28, 2003: Philippine Soldiers Hold Brief Mutiny, Fearing Their Government Is Staging Terrorist Attacks

A group of Philippine soldiers mutiny, claiming they are trying to prevent the Philippine government from staging terrorist attacks on its own people. About 300 soldiers, many of them officers, rig a large Manila shopping mall and luxury hotel with explosives, evacuate them, and then threaten to blow up the buildings unless President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and other top Philippine leaders resign. After a twenty hour siege, the soldiers surrender and no one is hurt. Their leaders are jailed for mutiny. While Arroyo remains in power, other top leaders resign, including the country's defense minister, police chief, and military intelligence chief. ([Aglionby 7/28/2003](#); [Klein 8/15/2003](#)) The mutineers had a number of grievances. They complain:

- Senior military officials, in collusion with President Arroyo, are secretly behind recent bombings that have been blamed on Muslim militant groups. They specifically claim that a series of bombings in March and April 2002 in the southern city of Davao that killed 38 people were actually false flag operations. (Their allegations could be related to a May 2002 incident in which a US citizen staying in the area was injured when a bomb he was making exploded in his hotel room; see [May 16, 2002](#). The Philippines media suggested that he was a CIA operative taking part in false flag operations.)

- The government is selling weapons and ammunition to rebel groups such as Abu Sayyaf even as these groups fight the government. The Guardian will later note that local newspaper reports describe the military's selling of weapons to rebels as 'an open secret' and "common knowledge." ([Klein 8/15/2003](#)) Gracia Burnham, an American missionary who was kidnapped in 2001 and held hostage by Abu Sayyaf rebels for more than a year, claims that her captors told her their weapons came from the Philippine government. ([Neumann 7/29/2003](#))

- Islamic militants are being allowed to escape from jail. Just two weeks before the mutiny, Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, a bomb maker with the al-Qaeda allied Jemaah Islamiyah group, was inexplicably able to escape from a heavily guarded prison in Manila. There are many dubious circumstances surrounding his escape (see [July 14, 2003](#)).

- The government is on the verge of staging a new string of bombings to justify declaring martial law so Arroyo can remain in office past the end of her term in 2004. The Guardian will later note, "Though the soldiers' tactics were widely condemned in the Philippines, there was widespread recognition in the press, and even inside the military, that their claims 'were valid and legitimate' Days before the mutiny, a coalition of church groups, lawyers, and NGOs launched a 'fact-finding mission' to investigate persistent rumors that the state was involved in the Davao explosions. It is also investigating the possible involvement of US intelligence agencies." ([Klein 8/15/2003](#)) CNN comments, "While the government issued a statement calling the accusation 'a lie,' and saying the soldiers themselves could be victims of propaganda, the soldiers' accusation plays on the fears of many Filipinos after the infamous 21-year term of President Ferdinand Marcos, during which he did the same thing. Marcos instigated a series of bombings and civil unrest in the late 1960s and early 1970s, using that as an excuse to declare martial law in 1972. It took the People Power Revolt of 1986 to end Marcos' dictatorship." ([Ressa 7/26/2003](#))



December 30, 2003: Book Shipment Claiming Russian False Flag Plot Seized by FSB

A truckload of about four thousand copies of the book “The FSB Blows Up Moscow” is seized by the FSB in order to protect “state secrets”. The book, by authors Alexander Litvinenko and Yuri Felshtinsky, claims the FSB orchestrated the 1999 apartment bombings (see [September 22-24, 1999](#), [September 9, 1999](#) and [September 13, 1999](#)). The bookseller calls it a “shock attack on freedom of the press in Russia” and suggests that “the fact that they opened the case under this part of the Criminal Code [on state secrets] is an indirect admission that they participated in the explosions.” ([Agence France-Presse 12/30/2003](#); [McGregor 1/30/2004](#))



March 24-May 11, 2004: Al-Zargawi Blamed for Beheading of US Citizen, but Video Raises Many Questions



A video still of Nick Berg being tormented by his captors in Iraq. [Source: Reuters] A video of US citizen Nick Berg being beheaded in Iraq is made public and causes widespread horror and outrage around the world. Berg had been working in Iraq with private companies installing communications towers. On March 24, 2004, he is taken into custody. Berg’s family is sent e-mails confirming that he is in US custody (however, US officials will later claim they were erroneously notified and he was in Iraqi government custody instead). The official reasons for his arrest are “lack of documentation” and “suspicious activities.” Regardless of who is holding him, it is not disputed that he is visited three times by the FBI while being held. On April 5, the Berg family launches an action against the US military for false imprisonment, and the next day Berg is released. Berg stays in a hotel in Baghdad for the next few days, and tells a hotel guest that he had been held in a jail with US soldiers as guards. His family last hears of him on April 9, when he tells them he is going to try to leave Iraq. Then, nearly a month later on May 8, his headless body is found dumped on a Baghdad roadside. Three days after that, on May 11, the video of his beheading is broadcast. ([Neville 5/29/2004](#);

[National Public Radio 8/14/2004](#)) The video shows five masked men taunting and then beheading Berg, and one of them claims to be Islamist militant leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Two days later, a CIA official says, "After the intelligence community conducted a technical analysis of the... video, the CIA assesses with high probability that the speaker on the tape is Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and that person is shown decapitating American citizen Nicholas Berg." ([BBC 5/13/2004](#)) However, many doubts about the video and the identity of al-Zarqawi surface:

- Berg is seen wearing an orange jumpsuit typically worn by detainees in US custody. At the start of the video, he speaks directly to the camera in a relaxed way. The Sydney Morning Herald will later comment, "It is highly likely that this segment is edited from the interrogation of Berg during his 13 days of custody."

- Then the video cuts to scenes including the five masked men. But their Arabic is heavily accented in Russian, Jordanian, and Egyptian. One says "do it quickly" in Russian. A voice also seems to ask in English, "How will it be done?" Glimpses of their skin look white. ([Neville 5/29/2004](#))

- The masked man identified as al-Zarqawi does not speak with a Jordanian accent even though al-Zarqawi is Jordanian. CNN staff familiar with al-Zarqawi's voice claim the voice does not sound like his. ([CNN 5/12/2004](#); [Neville 5/29/2004](#))

- Berg is then decapitated, but there is very little blood. Dr John Simpson, executive director for surgical affairs at the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, says, "I would have thought that all the people in the vicinity would have been covered in blood, in a matter of seconds... if it [the video] was genuine." Forensic death expert Jon Nordby of the American Board of Medicolegal Death Investigators suggests that the beheading was staged and Berg was already dead. He also suggests that Berg appears to be heavily drugged in earlier parts of the video. ([Goldstein 5/22/2004](#)) The Herald comments, "The scream is wildly out of sync, sounds female, and is obviously dubbed." ([Neville 5/29/2004](#))

- Al-Zarqawi is the one shown cutting Berg's throat with a knife, and uses his right hand to do so. But people who spent time in prison with al-Zarqawi and knew him well claim that he was left handed. ([Gettleman 7/13/2004](#))

- The timing of the video also raises suspicions, as it is broadcast just two weeks after the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal is exposed, and the shock of the beheadings cause some to claim a moral relativism to justify the US military's abusive behavior towards detainees. ([Neville 5/29/2004](#))

- Strangely, Al-Qaeda operative Zacarias Moussaoui somehow used Berg's e-mail account years before in Oklahoma (see [Autumn 1999](#)). US officials call this "a total coincidence."

- The London Times comments that "The CIA's insistence that al-Zarqawi was responsible appears based on the scantiest of evidence.... Sound experts have speculated that the voice might have been dubbed on." Further, "There are discrepancies in the times on the video frames." ([Allen-Mills and Fielding 5/23/2004](#))

- No autopsy is performed on Berg's body, nor is there any determination of the time of his death. ([Neville 5/29/2004](#))

- No proper investigation of the circumstances surrounding his death is ever conducted. For instance, the US military will tell Berg's family that they could find no evidence of Berg's last days in a Baghdad hotel and that no Westerner stayed in that hotel for weeks.

But the Washington Post was able to get a copy of the hotel register with Berg's name on it, along with the date of his checkout, a list of the things he left in his room, and the exact words he said as he left the hotel. ([National Public Radio 8/14/2004](#))

It will later be reported that the US military was conducting a propaganda campaign to inflate the importance of al-Zarqawi (see [April 10, 2006](#)), but it is unknown if Berg's death was somehow related to this campaign.



May 29-30, 2004: Gunmen Kill Western Hostages and Escape; Collusion with Saudi Security Is Suspected



The Oasis compound, where hostages were held. Bullet holes from the siege can be seen around some windows. [*Source: Wikipedia/ Public domain*] Gunmen attack oil company compounds in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, and then take hostages. The Khobar headquarters of APICORP (Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation) is attacked and six people are killed. About 30 minutes later, gunmen storm the Petroleum Center headquarters about two miles away and kill at least four people. Then the gunmen move less than a mile away to the Oasis compound, a residential building full of Westerners, and take hostages. After a 24-hour siege, all but one of attackers manage to escape even though the building is surrounded by a cordon of hundreds of police. At least 30 people are killed in total, including nine hostages. Al-Qaeda reportedly takes credit for the attacks. ([CNN 5/30/2004](#); [BBC 12/6/2004](#)) There is widespread speculation that the gunmen were allowed to walk free as part of a deal to ensure the safe release of other hostages. The BBC reports that counterterrorism experts say “they were surprised at the ease with which three of the four attackers were able to escape... despite the overwhelming numerical superiority of the security forces and the tactical and logistical advantages which they enjoyed. If true, the existence of collusion between attackers and the people meant to catch them would be most disturbing.” ([Asser 5/31/2004](#)) The Scotsman adds, “Eyewitnesses said they were highly skeptical of official accounts that there were only four kidnappers, insisting others were seen during the earlier attacks on two oil industry office buildings and entering the sprawling compound. It was also reported that they arrived in three vehicles.” Further, the fact that “the Khobar

attackers wore military uniforms has raised fears of collusion between militants and the security forces.” ([Theodoulou 6/1/2004](#))



[December 2, 2004: Possible CIA Operative Posing as Muslim Militant and Wanted Overseas Is Discovered Living in US](#)

A treasure hunter suspected of being a CIA operative is discovered living in the US. In May 2002, US citizen Michael Meiring accidentally blew himself up in a Philippines hotel room, and ended up losing both of his legs. He was mysteriously whisked back to the US amidst media reports suggesting he was a CIA operative posing as a Muslim militant bomber (see [May 16, 2002](#)). On June 19, 2002, the chief of the Philippines' National Bureau of Investigation vowed that Meiring would be brought back to the Philippines to face charges since he appeared to have returned to the US, and the Philippines and the US have an existing extradition treaty. ([Arguillas 6/1/2003](#)) On December 2, 2004, a Houston TV station will discover that Meiring is living in Houston, Texas. They examined court documents about him and learned that earlier in 2004 he changed his last name to Van De Meer. The Philippine government confirms that they issued an arrest warrant for Meiring and are still looking for him and an associate of his named Stephen Hughes, who is now said to be living in North Carolina. Counterterrorism expert Ron Hatchett asks, “How is he able to walk around freely within our society using the name that is on the arrest warrant for him?” Meiring is reached by phone in California. His only on the record comment to the reporter who discovered him is, “If this harms me in any way, you will find my power then, and you’ll find out who I am. But I will come for you. You harm me I will not let you off the hook.” ([Greenblatt 12/2/2004](#); [Filipino Reporter 12/30/2004](#)) In early 2005, it will be reported that Meiring may not get extradited back to the Philippines because the Philippine government cannot produce a picture of him. ([Mindanao Times 3/23/2005](#)) However, previous media reports claimed that a picture ID of Meiring was found in his hotel room after the explosion there. The ID lists him as an officer in the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), a Muslim rebel militant group. ([Greenblatt 12/2/2004](#)) He appears to have ties to leaders of that group and other Philippine Muslim militant groups since 1992 (see [1992-1993](#)). Since 2004, there have been no reports of Meiring being successfully extradited.



[March 2005: Israel Honors People Involved in Lavon Affair](#)

Israel officially honors the nine Egyptian Jews who were involved in the “Lavon Affair” bombings in Egypt (see [July 1954](#)) Israeli President Moshe Katzav, presiding over the 2005 ceremony honoring the bombers in Jerusalem, says that the Israeli government has “decided now to express our respect for these heroes.” In 1954, in an effort to damage Egypt’s relationship with the West, Israeli agents bombed sites frequented by foreigners in Cairo and Alexandria with hopes that the attacks would be blamed on the Muslim

Brotherhood. But the operation unraveled when one of the bombs being planted went off prematurely. ([Reuters 3/30/2005](#))



[Early June 2005: US Intelligence Find Evidence of Mossad or CIA Support For Insurgents in Iraq](#)

US Intelligence officers report that some of the insurgents in Iraq are using recent-model Beretta 02 pistols that have no serial numbers. The numbers have not been removed; the guns came off a production line with no number. “Analysts suggest the lack of serial numbers indicates that the weapons were intended for intelligence operations or terrorist cells with substantial government backing. Analysts speculate that these guns are probably from either Mossad or the CIA. Analysts speculate that agent provocateurs may be using the untraceable weapons even as US authorities use insurgent attacks against civilians as evidence of the illegitimacy of the resistance.” ([United Press International 6/6/2005](#))



[July 13, 2005: Former Bush Administration Lawyer Suggests US Should Stage Fake Terror Attacks and Blame Them on Al-Qaeda](#)

John Yoo, a law professor at UC Berkeley who worked in the Justice Department and provided legal justification for some of Bush’s policies after 9/11 (see [September 25, 2001](#)), suggests some provocative ideas in a Los Angeles Times editorial. He argues the US should go on the offensive against al-Qaeda, having “our intelligence agencies create a false terrorist organization. It could have its own websites, recruitment centers, training camps, and fundraising operations. It could launch fake terrorist operations and claim credit for real terrorist strikes, helping to sow confusion within al-Qaeda’s ranks, causing operatives to doubt others’ identities and to question the validity of communications.” ([Yoo 7/13/2005](#))



October 12, 2005: Bali Bombings May Have Been Orchestrated the Military, Says Former President of Indonesia



Abdurrahman Wahid. [Source: *Indonesian Embassy in the Netherlands*] In an interview with the Australian public television station SBS, Abdurrahman Wahid, president of Indonesia from 1999 to 2001, suggests that the country's military or police may have been behind the 2002 Bali bombings (see [October 12, 2002](#)). The Australian reports: "Wahid told SBS's Dateline program that he had grave concerns about links between Indonesian authorities and terrorist groups and believed that authorities may have organized the larger of the two 2002 Bali bombings which hit the Sari Club, killing the bulk of the 202 people who died.... Asked who he thought planted the Sari Club bomb, Mr Wahid said: 'Maybe the police... or the armed forces. The orders to do this or that came from within our armed forces, not from the fundamentalist people.'" Wahid believes the smaller bomb was indeed planted by Islamist militants. ([SBS Dateline 10/12/2005](#); [Stewart and Powell 10/13/2005](#)) Counterterrorism expert John Mempi also comments, "Why this endless violence [in Indonesia]? Why are there acts of terrorism year in, year out? Regimes change, governments change, but violence continues. Why? Because there is a sort of shadow state in this country. A state within a state ruling this country." ([SBS Dateline 10/12/2005](#)) In 2008, Imam Samudra, imprisoned and sentenced to death for being one of the Bali bombings masterminds, will make comments similar to Wahid's. While he admits being involved in the bombings, he claims that they never meant to kill so many people. He says the second explosion was much bigger than they had expected and suggests that "the CIA or KGB or Mossad" had somehow tampered with the bomb. ([Sheridan 3/2/2008](#))



November 9, 2005: Three Simultaneous Suicide Bombings in Jordan; Israeli Tourists Evacuated in Advance



Saijida Mubarak Atrous al-Rishawi confesses on Jordanian television to attempting to be one of the suicide bombers. Her bomb belt is also shown. [Source: BBC / Jordanian Television] Three hotels in Amman, Jordan are simultaneously bombed. Sixty people, including three bombers, are killed and 115 others are injured. The explosions take place at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, the Radisson SAS Hotel, and the Days Inn, which are hotels often frequented by Western military contractors and diplomats. The bomb at the Radisson explodes in a ballroom where a wedding reception is taking place. The Jordanian government soon announces that the group Al-Qaeda in Iraq, which is supposedly led by the Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, took credit for the attack in an Internet statement. ([CNN 11/12/2005](#)) Within days, an Iraqi woman accused of being a failed fourth suicide bomber confesses to participating in the attack on Jordanian television. CNN notes that "Many people were expressing doubt [whether the woman] really was involved..." ([CNN 11/14/2005](#)) Two leading Palestinian security officials - West Bank military intelligence chief Maj Gen. Bashir Nafeh and his aide Col. Abel Allun - are among those killed. ([BBC 11/10/2005](#)) The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reports, "The Radisson is known to be popular with Israeli tourists," yet no Israelis were killed in the bombings. "Hours before the bombings, many Israelis were evacuated from the Radisson... apparently due to a specific security alert." (The Haaretz report about this is retracted and then later reinstated.) ([Stern and Blumenkrantz 10/11/2005](#)) The Los Angeles Times also notes that Haaretz report and adds that Amos N. Guiora, a former leader of the Israel Defense Forces, told the Times that "sources in Israel had also told him about the pre-attack evacuations. "It means there was excellent intelligence that this thing was going to happen.... The question that needs to be answered is why weren't the Jordanians working at the hotel similarly removed?" ([Khalil, Kadri, and Meyer 11/10/2005](#)) The deaths of the Palestinian intelligence officials and warning to Israeli tourists cause some, especially in the Muslim world, to claim that the attacks were an Israeli false flag operation. ([Morley 11/15/2005](#))



September 15, 2006: Al-Qaeda-Linked Attack on Oil Facilities in Yemen Is Foiled

Two simultaneous suicide attacks on oil and gas installations in Yemen fail. The Safer refinery in Marib and the al-Dhabba terminal in Hadramout are attacked by four suicide bombers with car bombs, but Yemeni security forces blow the cars up just before they reach their targets. The four suicide bombers and one security guard are killed. The attacks come just a few days after al-Qaeda number two Ayman al-Zawahiri called for attacks on oil facilities in the Persian Gulf region. A Yemeni court later sentences 32 men to between two and 15 years in jail for their roles in the attacks. Three of them are alleged al-Qaeda operatives tried in absentia who escaped from prison earlier in 2006 (see [February 3, 2006](#)). ([BBC 11/7/2007](#)) Anwar Al Aulaqi, an imam for several of the 9/11 hijackers while they lived in the US, was arrested in Yemen earlier in the month (see [Early September 2006-December 2007](#)). He allegedly also has a role preparing for the foiled attacks. ([Chulov and Stewart 11/3/2006](#); [Stewart and Chulov 11/4/2006](#)) The attempted attacks also come just days before Yemen's presidential elections. Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Saleh, in power since 1978, quickly uses the attacks to criticize his opponent, because one of the opponents' guards was accused of being involved. The guard is later acquitted. Saleh wins reelection. ([Worth 3/1/2008](#)) In 2008, one anonymous senior Yemeni official will tell the Washington Post that some important al-Qaeda members have had a long relationship with Yemen's intelligence agencies and have targeted political opponents in the past. ([Whitlock 5/4/2008](#))